COLOR, THE VISUAL ARTS, AND REPRESENTATIONS OF OTHERNESS IN THE VICTORIAN NOVEL

A Dissertation

by

JESSICA MARIE DURGAN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2012

Major Subject: English

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ABSTRACT

Color, the Visual Arts, and Representations of Otherness in the Victorian Novel.

(May 2012)

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This dissertation investigates the cultural connections made between race and color in works of fiction from the Victorian and Edwardian era, particularly how authors who are also artists invent fantastically colored characters who are purple, blue, red, and yellow to rewrite (and sometimes reclaim) difference in their fiction. These strange and eccentric characters include the purple madwoman in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), the blue gentleman from Wilkie Collins's *Poor Miss Finch* (1872), the red peddler in Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* (1878), and the little yellow girls of Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Yellow Face" (1893) and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911).

These fictional texts serve as a point of access into the cultural meanings of color in the nineteenth century and are situated at the intersection of Victorian discourses on the visual arts and race science. The second half of the nineteenth century constitutes a significant moment in the history of color: the rapid development of new color technologies helps to trigger the upheavals of the first avant-garde artistic movements

and a reassessment of coloring's prestige in the art academies. At the same time, race science appropriates color, using it as a criterion for classification in the establishment of global racial hierarchies. By imagining what it would be like to change one's skin color, these artist-authors employ the aesthetic realm of color to explore the nature of human difference and alterity. In doing so, some of them are able to successfully formulate their own challenges to nineteenth-century racial discourse.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation begins, somewhat playfully, with the immortal words of a puppet: "It's not that easy being green" (Dobrin 232). Kermit the Frog's words, as performed in Joe Raposo's song "Bein' Green," have taken on a life of their own as a cultural reference since their first performance in 1970 on an episode of the children's television show *Sesame Street*. The pithy line, while literally referring to the green hue of Kermit's amphibious skin, also references the concept of experiencing the world from another's perspective in a figurate nature. Kermit tells us that it is difficult to be green, as we flesh-toned people might imagine, because he "blend[s] in with so many other ordinary things/And people tend to pass you over/'Cause you're not standing out" (232). In keeping with the social progressive values of the early 1970s, however, the song is meant to encourage "children to be happy with who they are" (234); it therefore ends with Kermit realizing that green is "beautiful" and "what [he] want[s] to be" (232).

Kermit's words also ask children to empathize with the experience of others and imagine what it might be like to be green, or to be a frog, or just to be different. Many viewers of the time imagined that in the song, written at the end of the Civil Rights movement, the word "green" was a substitution for the word "black," and that the true message was about interracial harmony. It is no coincidence that "Bein' Green" was often performed as a duet by Kermit with African-American artists, including Lena

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This dissertation follows the style of the *Modern Language Association*.

Horne in 1974 and Ray Charles in 1975 (Dobrin 234). The song indirectly explores the connections between skin color and racial identity.

Nine years previously, journalist John Howard Griffin had conducted an experiment on what it was like to be black in 1960s America by artificially altering his skin pigment and reporting his experiences in the book *Black Like Me*. Kermit's song also explores what it is like to look different, but through more figurative means. The use of a talking green frog enables an imaginative discussion that allows viewers to envision the experience of difference through the distancing metaphor of greenness, a color that is well removed from the spectrum of human skin colors. In the song, Kermit's greenness is a sign that encompasses his other types of alterity, including his animal and inanimate statuses. The example of "Bein' Green" captures the human impulse to discuss problematic social divisions through the intermediary of color, an impulse that is the focus of this work. Because color is a vibrant cultural construction with a wide web of possible meanings, it is often employed discursively to challenge or reinforce the idea of difference.

Though Kermit ultimately comes to accept his given coloring, he wonders at first whether it would "be nicer being red, or yellow, or gold/Or something much more colorful like that" (Dobrin 232). The listener is also left pondering what it would be like to be red, or yellow, or even Kermit's Crayola-crayon green. But this question is not a new one. Well before Kermit wondered and Griffin changed his skin color, British writers of the Victorian era were using the imaginative nature of literature to respond to the racial tensions of the nineteenth century. These writers created fantastically colored

characters and represented their experiences within their fiction. Among these characters are the mad heiress Bertha Mason, who is described as being purple in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847); the effeminate gentleman Oscar Dubourg, who turns bright blue in *Poor Miss Finch* by Wilkie Collins (1872); the red and rebellious peddler Diggory Venn of Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* (1868); and the little yellow girls Lucy Hebron and Mary Lennox from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mystery "The Yellow Face" (1894) and Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911), respectively. "Color, the Visual Arts, and Representations of Otherness in the Victorian Novel" observes and examines the peculiar literary habit whereby authors exaggerate skin color through the figurative depiction of rainbow-colored characters in order to explore the connections made between race and color in the nineteenth century. Focusing on several British novels and short stories that prominently feature extraordinary skin colors, this dissertation notices the characters who are purple, red, blue, and yellow and, for the first time, questions the meanings, cultural and literary, surrounding this phenomenon.

The chosen novels and short stories represent many different methods for the figuring of these remarkable skin colors. Some of the characters in these fictional works are described as possessing colored skin as a result of interracial parentage, such as the characters in *Jane Eyre* and the Sherlock Holmes mystery. This type of figurative skin color, often portrayed as purple or yellow, appears to be a permanent marking of inherited racial difference. Other characters, though born white, have skin that alters in color through contact with disease and moral decline in the colonies, as in *The Secret*

Garden. Most fantastically, some characters transform their skin colors completely through bodily interaction with colored materials or chemicals, such as in *The Return of the Native* and *Poor Miss Finch*. Although the presentations of each "colored" character emerge from the texts' individual plots and circumstances, they have in common an imaginative color figuration, as well as the socio-historical context of the Victorian era.

In exploring this strange literary and cultural phenomenon, this project is necessarily interdisciplinary in its scope, drawing on work in art history, material culture studies, and postcolonial theory. One of the greatest difficulties of a study of color in the Victorian novel is that these narratives play on the many possible meanings of color as an entity, as well as those of each discrete shade. Richard Dyer, in his influential monograph *White*, illustrates this difficulty when he identifies three different "senses" in which the color white "is felt and understood" in Western culture. He states, "First, white is a category of colour or *hue* . . . Second, white is a category of *skin* colour. Third, white, like any other hue, has *symbolic* connotations" (45). Each of the fictional works I have selected includes a certain amount of slippage between these three senses; any meaningful deconstruction of this slippage requires a multi-faceted approach. First, I draw on the disciplines of art history and material culture to recover the history of each hue in its physical form as a pigment. Second, I use postcolonial theory and the history of race science to trace the association of color with human complexions and investigate how skin came to function as a means to categorize human difference. Last, I outline the history of color in the West that informs the meanings of color in the nineteenth century.

One of the primary disciplines on which I draw in this project is that of art history. It is no coincidence that several of the authors whose work I explore were also amateur artists. Much critical work on the nineteenth century has established the prominence of the visual arts during this period. Antonia Losano refers to a Victorian "obsession with the visual arts" in *The Pre-Raphaelite Art of the Victorian Novel: Narrative Challenges to Visual Gendered Boundaries* (6), while Ann Bermingham's work *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* draws attention to the social aspects of drawing and the polite arts in the nineteenth century. Bermingham argues that artistic skills such as drawing "function[ed] . . . as a sign of taste and social position" and were used to form important class distinctions on the part of the educated and wealthy (x). Drawing was also a skill that "enabled individuals to produce and stage their individuality, to become persons as well as subjects" (xi). An important benefit of an artistic education in the nineteenth century was that it was open, though to various degrees, to women as well as men. The eighteenth century "man of sensibility" and the Romantic artist-hero evolved to include the "accomplished woman" of the nineteenth century (xi). As the century progressed, an artistic education was made available to more and more classes of Britons, culminating in the establishment of "the institution of drawing in government-run elementary schools" (232). One of the reasons why the authors I discuss turn to the visual arts is quite simply that the visual arts, invested as they were with significant social meanings, formed a large part of these authors' earliest education and expressions of their identities.

As Losano's and Bermingham's work suggests, criticism on art and aesthetics should take into account how aesthetic concerns such as taste and beauty are nonetheless embedded in social history. As Terry Eagleton argues in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, "The construction of the modern notion of the aesthetic artifact is . . . inseparable from the construction of the dominant ideological forms of modern class-society" (3). In her essay "Max Raphael and the Question of Aesthetics," Michèle Barrett coins the phrase "materialist aesthetics" to describe this process of adding a theoretical framework informed by the social and political aspects of a culture to the study of its artistic production and reception. Materialist aesthetics lends itself to a study of color, a concept that is often relegated to realm of taste but is in fact largely a social and political issue. The social meanings of color are often used politically to delineate or divide peoples along ideological lines; for example, color is often gendered. (What preschooler couldn't explain which colors are assigned to boys and which to girls in Western society?) Similarly, color is also tied to racial constructions, particularly in the nineteenth century, when all non-European peoples were referred to as "colored." The use of color as an othering technique went beyond skin color to aesthetics, however, as these same peoples were often seen as taking a childlike or primitive delight in the visual properties of color. What was understood to be their simple pleasure in color was contrasted with supposedly more sophisticated European tastes for muted dress and a classical appreciation of the monochrome. As these examples suggest, color is a multifaceted cultural construction with links to several important ideological conceptions of the nineteenth century already of interest to the humanities. Analyzing both the

aesthetic and social meanings of color can provide a lens through which to view established concerns of cultural study from a new perspective, as well as allow us to tease out color's political uses in the Victorian period.

Building on the suggestion of Barrett's "materialist aesthetics," I also make use of material culture studies to consider the production history of the specific hues and pigments that appear in each fictional work. Material culture asks us, in the words of Elaine Freedgood, to take the objects of literary texts "seriously" (1). Freedgood's *The Ideas in Things: Fugitive Meaning in the Victorian Novel* proposes that rather than merely reading the objects of a literary work for their figurative or symbolic meanings in the narrative, we should look at the literal meanings of said objects. She asks that the object be "investigated in terms of its own properties and history and then refigured alongside and athwart the novel's manifest or dominant narrative" (12). She models readings of three overlooked objects in canonical Victorian novels, including the mahogany furniture of Thornfield Hall in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), the Barton family's calico curtains in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), and Magwitch's tobacco in Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1860-61). Researching the history of mahogany furniture, for instance, leads Freedgood to the violent histories of slavery and deforestation in Jamaica that are implicated in both the furniture's production and Bertha's subordination. She argues that paying attention to objects one normally ignores when reading can help readers isolate what theorist Pierre Macherey calls "a moment of 'splitting' within the novel" that illustrates "the play of history beyond its edges, encroaching on those edges" (qtd. in Freedgood 3). The history of

these objects haunts the text, she claims, providing an alternative storyline that is neither affirmed nor denied by the novel's dominate narrative.

We need a similar project concerning color as it appears in the nineteenth-century novel. Because color possesses a significant cultural history of its own, it must be explored outside of as well as within the text. Throughout the four chapters of this dissertation, I work to recover the cultural histories of certain colors in order to read their social meanings within the time period, but I also investigate the production history of each pigment as a material object. In highlighting the alternate histories of color that reside in the chosen texts, I hope to offer a new reading experience of these popular works as well as to enrich the way we understand the construction of color in the West.

To do so, I combine the work of material culture studies with that of postcolonial theory because recovering the histories of pigments in England is inherently a postcolonial process. In researching the histories of certain objects in Victorian novels, Freedgood is essentially recovering their imperial history. Her examples of Thornfield's furniture (made from the wood of the West Indies), the Bartons' calico curtains (an African pattern reproduced on Indian fabric), and Magwitch's tobacco (from the Americas by way of Australia) all trace the exchange of goods across the British Empire. As Freedgood illustrates, the objects' narratives "tell[] the story of imperial domination" that allows the metropole to consume goods derived in the colonial hinterland (3). In a similar manner, an investigation of the origins of crimson (Spanish Mexico), indigo (British West and East Indies), Indian yellow (Mughal and British India), or Tyrian

purple (Roman and Byzantine Lebanon) leads researchers across the globe and through the histories of several empires.

Each of the novels to be discussed is also informed by empire, as they were all published in the period between 1847 (*Jane Eyre*) and 1911 (*The Secret Garden*), an era that coincides with the apogee of British imperial power. This period also coincides with the rise of race science because biological racism (the idea that some groups of people are inherently superior to others) worked to justify the ethical ambiguities of imperial domination. The expansion of the British Empire and its supporting foundation of race science were significant forces in the shaping of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century works of fiction. The collusion between the British novel and the practices of imperialism has been documented by various literary critics, most notably Edward Said. Said claims that "cultural forms like the novel . . . were immensely important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references, and experiences" (xii). Suvendrini Perera has further argued, "Empire is not simply expressed or reflected in the novel . . . it is rather processed and naturalized by it" (7). She concludes, "empire is unimaginable in its particular form without its processing and legitimating in the novel" (7). Yet, as other postcolonial critics have demonstrated, not all Victorian authors agreed with British imperial policies. Susan Meyer, for instance, contends that the novel can also make "a surprisingly forceful critique of empire" in certain circumstances (28). This larger interplay of pro-Imperial and anti-Imperial beliefs is visible in several of the fictional works to be discussed, particularly in each author's use of color, which sometimes

suggests a resistance to Victorian social values and other times offers a means to reinforce those same values.

Postcolonial theory also informs my readings of the representations of skin color within these novels. One cannot talk about skin color—even imaginative skin color—without evoking constructions of race and racial difference. The skin colors in the novels were used not only for characterization, but also to evoke real peoples. These people are often grounded in the historical realities of the British Empire in the nineteenth century, as many colored characters are from or travel to the spaces of empire. Collins, for example, links the blue otherness of his English male hero, Oscar, to the racial otherness of the colonial subject, and specifically uses the history of indigo's production to signal his concern over the treatment of the Indian subjects of the British Empire. Oscar's color can be understood as a signifier of racial difference between white and colored, or in other words, white and other. Many postcolonial theorists have written extensively on racial othering and provide helpful terms for considering color as it relates to race in European discourse. For example, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak examines the nineteenth-century texts of the East India Company in light of their turn to "chromatism," in which racial discrimination is predicated on "the visible difference in skin colour" ("Imperialism" 235). Franz Fanon's version of chromatism is "epidermalization" (11), a term he uses to describe the internalization of inferiority and alienation in the victims of racial prejudice within the French colonial system. Oscar, for instance, experiences what could be called an epidermalization after his transformation to blueness results in lowered self-esteem and his isolation from

society. As Oscar's struggles illustrate, the inclusion of color in the Victorian novel has the power to question (as well as to reinforce) nineteenth-century discourses of racial difference.

Yet the racialized meanings of color are only one aspect of its extensive cultural history. Color has generally been overlooked within the humanities and its study has been largely relegated to students and practitioners of the fine arts. Yet color has far-reaching implications for all disciplines of the humanities because it is "first and foremost a social phenomenon" that possesses its own cultural history (Pastoureau, *Blue* 7). In fact, the wide spectrum of color's cultural history can complicate its study, as color historian Michel Pastoureau illustrates. He states, "As soon as the historian seeks to study color, he must grapple with a host of factors all at once: physics, chemistry, materials, and techniques of production, as well as iconography, ideology, and the symbolic meanings that colors convey" (8). While color is objective in one sense, in that it exists in nature through pigment and light waves, it is also a subjective experience, accessible only through human perception (Gage, *Meaning* 11).[1] Another complication is that the subjective aspects of color are not only physiological, but also dependent upon specific cultural and linguistic constructions, making color, as Umberto Eco has argued, a "[cultural] puzzle . . . filtered through a linguistic system" (159).[2] Accordingly, there are no "universal or archetypal truths . . . [that] reside in color" (Pastoureau, *Blue* 7); instead, color's meanings are always specific to the historical and ideological configurations of the individual society under discussion, in this case Western Europe.

Despite the difficulties inherent in grappling with color, it has recently emerged as a viable subject for academic study. Pastoureau has attempted cultural histories of individual colors in the works *Blue: The History of a Color* (2001) and *Black: The History of a Color* (2009), while art historian John Gage has traced color's development in painting in *Color and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction* (1993) and *Color and Meaning: Art, Science, and Symbolism* (2000). Similarly, Victoria Finlay has taken a materialist approach to recover the history of paint and pigment production around the world in *Color: A Natural History of the Palette* (2002). What these scholars and writers have indicated is that color inhabits an extremely complex and problematic position in Western cultural history. In fact, Pastoureau and artist David Batchelor have argued that there exists an extreme cultural prejudice against color in our society. Batchelor claims in his work *Chromophobia* (2000) that "colour has been the object of extreme prejudice in Western culture. . . . It is, I believe, no exaggeration to say that, in the West, since Antiquity, colour has been systematically marginalized, reviled, diminished and degraded" (22). He argues that this othering of color is actually a "fear of contamination and corruption by something that is unknown or appears unknowable," which he refers to as "chromophobia" (22). The fear that color is "alien and therefore dangerous" is related, according to Batchelor, to many other social fears of difference, as color has been continually associated with "the feminine, the oriental, the primitive, the infantile, the vulgar, the queer or the pathological" throughout history (22-23). As Batchelor's work suggests, the social constructions of color have historically been employed to marginalize unpopular social groups. Much of literary criticism of the past

forty years has been intensely interested the socio-political contexts and meanings of texts, especially how literary works either reinforce or subvert historical class, race, and gender constructs. I aim to show that color is a significant, if previously neglected, subject in which these class, race, and gender debates have been manifested historically. I argue that the cultural meanings of color are conscripted into these debates, used as a means to divide and rank groups of people along class, gender, and racial lines.

The cultural stigma of color that Batchelor and Pastoureau identify is not just an historical trend, but instead a contemporary reality. This illustrated by a more recent twentieth-century anecdote concerning a painting on display in the National Gallery in London. In 1968, the museum's restoration team cleaned Titian's famous *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1520-23), removing several layers of the "very, very thick, almost amber-colored varnish" that had both protected and obscured the painting over the course of time ("Art in the Making: *Bacchus*"). The conservation department discovered that Titian's work contained a luminous and "exuberant" coloring, which had been hidden for centuries. Chief Restorer David Bomford has made the claim that the "ultramarine in the sky is the purest found in any painting yet examined at the National Gallery" (20). Yet when the museum triumphantly displayed its work, the restored *Bacchus and Ariadne* was not well received by British audiences. Restorer Jill Dunkerton explains that it was "really a shock to some people to discover how intensely-coloured [the painting] was" ("Art in the Making: *Bacchus*"). The reaction was stronger than shock, however, as British audiences "didn't like the look" (Finlay 288). Museum-goers were used to viewing historical works of art through heavy and discolored varnishes, and,

over time, had come to associate the somber, muddy coloring that results from the deterioration of time with the cultural weight of "great art."[3] Although the restoration of Titian's painting illustrates that this is a misconception, the perception of bright coloring as somehow ahistorical is still slow to change.

Yet their reaction also represents the cultural legacy of color, and the artistic hierarchy that privileged other artistic skills such as composition and drawing over that of coloring. As Finlay claims, British audiences "felt it [*Bacchus and Ariadne*] was too bright and preferred the off-greens and browns of the discoloured varnish. Titian, it was argued, was a man of taste: he could never have chosen that gaudily shimmering blue" (289). The issue, Finlay reveals, was over the connection between the luminosity of the color and its perceived vulgarity. While the audiences knew they did not like the painting, what they did not realize was that their violent reactions towards the painting were influenced by nearly twenty-five hundred years of philosophical debates that have resulted in the modern cultural prejudices against color.

These prejudices can be traced back to some of the most fundamental philosophical debates in Western history. Since antiquity, painting, and therefore color, has been caught up in the uneven binary division of the mind over the body, reason over pleasure, ideas over matter. As Jacqueline Lichtenstein suggests in *The Eloquence of Color* (1989), "it all begins with Plato" (37). In his *Gorgias*, she explains, "Plato condemns as 'ugly' all practices that aim for 'what is pleasant, omitting what is best,' ones he designates by the generic term of 'flatteries'" (38). He is taking pointed aim at what he sees as false rhetoric, but painting is caught up in this debates because Plato's

"argument applies its criteria to all the simulacra of appearance, [and] its general critique of flattery includes all the mimetic arts" (38). Other philosophers built on this model, and "the Platonic opposition between philosophy and rhetoric was recast in Aristotelian aesthetics as an opposition between line and colour—*disegno* versus *colore*" (Batchelor 53). Line, or drawing, was considered by Aristotle to be "the repository of thought in art" and representative of all that was intellectual and rational (28-29). Color, on the other hand, was relegated to the disfavored side of the binary, considered "ornament[al]" in nature and sharing the dangerously false and seductive qualities of rhetoric (29). As Batchelor establishes, Aristotle built on the example of the "iconoclast Plato, for whom a painter was merely 'a grinder and mixer of multi-color drugs'" (31). The legacy of antiquity has been the alignment of color with sensuality, as well as cosmetics, drugs, flattery, and other forms of lies.

As time progressed, the division between line as a representative of the intellectual/rational and color as a representative of the sensual/emotional only increased. The Italian Renaissance brought a massive theoretical debate between artists over the merits of *disegno* and *colore*. Design was a large and complex category encompassing invention and composition, as well as the graphic techniques, such as drawing and shading, necessary "to render a three-dimensional volume on a two-dimensional surface" (Gage, *Culture* 138). Its virtues were represented by the Florentine school, which adhered to classical ideals and was led by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo. Its rival, *colore*, consisted of "the chromatic embellishment of the picture and the tonal arrangement of a composition" (138). Color and its possibilities

were promoted by Titian, Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto, and other artists from Venice, which was "the center of the pigment trade in Europe" during the period (Bomford 18). At issue in this Renaissance debate was the value of art itself: line was considered "the extension of idea," but color was "only the product of pigments and material" (Pastoureau, *Black* 155). How, line's proponents asked, can one tell if the beauty of a painting's coloring derived from the artist's skill or the quality of the paint as manufactured by the tradesman? The dispute came down to the perceived value and difficulty of each skill, with both the Florentines and Venetians attacking the abilities of the other school. For example, Michelangelo commented on Titian's work in 1546, saying "he liked [Titian's] coloring, but 'it is a pity that in Venice one was not taught from the beginning to draw well'" (Finlay 289).[4] In response, the painter El Greco, who had studied under Titian, retorted that Michelangelo "was a fine chap but did not know how to paint" (Gage, *Culture* 138). The debate between *disegno* and *colore*, and Florentine and Venetian, was never resolved and eventually revived in seventeenth-century France.

The artists of the new French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture (established 1648) continued the earlier argument with a "bitterness whose vehemence outclassed the earlier experience of the Italians" (Lichtenstein 148). The institutionalization of art, as well as other developments of the Enlightenment, elevated the debate to "a more theoretical level" (Gage, *Culture* 128). French philosopher René Descartes' influential work established an "epistemological division of human experience into two categories: primary qualities, such as spatial extension, which are

more permanent, essential and available to the higher faculty of reason; and secondary qualities, such as color or scent, more contingent, changeable, and available to the senses," a division that had lasting consequences for Western painting, according to art historian Linda Nochlin ("Picasso's Colors" 106). The Academicians, clamoring for the resources and attention of the King, wisely chose to align themselves with line, a primary quality associated with intellect, over color, which was linked with the body. Yet they were not without their detractors. If sixteenth-century Italy was characterized by a rivalry between the followers of Michelangelo and Titian, the seventeenth-century French artists grouped themselves into the "warring camps" of *Poussinistes* and *Rubénistes* (Nochlin, "Picasso's Colors" 106). The logical Nicolas Poussin was promoted as the "champion of line, permanent values, and sober reason," while the Baroque Sir Peter Paul Rubens's faction backed "color, emotional variability and sensual delight" (106). This debate continued well into the nineteenth century, as is evidenced by the caricature of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and Eugène Delacroix jousting (see fig. A-1), in which Neoclassical artist Ingres carries a pen as his weapon while Romantic Delacroix fights with a paintbrush to defend the name of color, and it was again resumed in the early twentieth century by proponents of Pablo Picasso's drawing and Henri Matisse's coloring (Nochlin, "Picasso's Colors" 106).

Though the debate continued, the institutional triumph of line was complete by the eighteenth century, with coloring presented as "at best a secondary consideration" (Gage, *Culture* 138). The Academies of Europe built on the classical ideals of the Florentine School and its successors in order to claim for themselves the intellectual

prestige of *disegno*. This resulted in a "hierarchical ordering within [the skills of] painting which . . . describes a descent from 'invention' through 'design' to 'chiaroscuro' and, finally, to 'color'" in Academic art (Batchelor 29). Sir Joshua Reynolds, renowned eighteenth-century portraitist and the first president of the English Royal Academy of Arts, identified coloring as "a part of Painting merely mechanical" in his highly popular treatise *Discourses* (121). Reynolds' declaration represents the complete devaluing of the skills of coloring and the relegation of coloring to the negative side of the *disegno*/*colore* binary.

It was not until the nineteenth century that any real challenge to line's dominance was made within European art. Several historical factors contributed to this change in color's fortune. Early in the century, Romanticism's intellectual and social upheavals led to new explorations in color philosophy and the development of color theory. Next, the Industrial Revolution created new technologies that made color's mass production and distribution easier. By the end of the century, these aesthetic and technological developments combined to produce new artistic techniques and the first avant-garde movements, all of which resulted in a re-evaluation of color's place in the visual arts and the culture at large.

First, the nineteenth century is characterized by new explorations in the nature of color, as both philosophers and artists struggled to understand the physical and perceptual aspects of the phenomenon. The initial interest in color in the early years of the century developed out of the Romantic tradition in literature and the arts. In 1810, Romantic philosopher Johann Wolfgang von Goethe published his *Die Farbenlehre*

(*Theory of Colors*). In this influential work, Goethe opposed Newton's analytic treatment of color in the light spectrum and instead outlined the "moral and symbolic value for colours" that was "shaped . . . by the poet's experience of art" (Gage, *Meaning* 190-91). Goethe's suggestion that color was subjective rather than objective, as scientists had portrayed, influenced later investigations of color by other philosophers, including Arthur Shopenhauer and Ludwig Wittgenstein. While the German philosophers' work with color focused on the "abstract and symbolic," the French explored the "perceptual" aspects of color (185). For example, the French chemist Michel Eugène Chevreul's work with the dyeing industry led him to develop the law of simultaneous contrast and complementary color wheel in the late 1830s, which described how a color's appearance could change through its proximity to the other colors due to the limitations and perceptions of the human eye. Not all nineteenth-century investigations into the nature of color were confined to fields of philosophy and science, however. British Prime Minister William Gladstone, for instance, a classical scholar as well as a politician, published a paper entitled "Homer's Perceptions and Use of Color," which asked whether the ancient Greeks were able to see the color blue because of a perceived lack of references to the color in classical poetry. Gladstone's interest in the topic derived from his own study in the color-language of Homer's works combined with the research on colorblindness emerging in the 1850s (Gage, *Meaning* 11). As linguist John Lyons explains, Gladstone (falsely) determined that there must be a "psychological, or neurophysiological, difference between 'the Greeks of the heroic age' and men and women of his own day whose 'organ of color' was more highly developed"

(216).[5] The missing blue references in Homer have since been determined to be linguistic rather than physiological in nature, but Gladstone's example illustrates the struggle to understand the nature of color and its perception during the nineteenth century.

The Industrial Revolution brought several technical advances in color's production that led to greater dissemination of color in people's daily lives over the course of the century. In 1835, British printer George Baxter patented the Baxter process for the first commercially viable color printing, which built up layers of color through a series of wood blocks inked with individual colors. Baxter's process provided color illustrations for books and annuals, as well as colored prints of paintings, replacing the previous black and white engraving process. Similarly, the "blossoming science of chemistry provide[d] a range of new synthetic pigments" for artistic and commercial uses (Lamb and Bourriau 2). British chemist William Perkin discovered a range of new aniline dyes, when in 1856, an experiment in the uses of coal-tar resulted in a mauve-colored dye (Garfield 8). Because purple was a difficult and expensive dye to make naturally, Perkin foresaw its commercial potential and named his product after the extinct Tyrian purple of antiquity. When Queen Victoria and Empress Eugénie adopted the color (Garfield 59), the result was a sudden and widespread craze for purple that lasted throughout the second half of the century and culminated in the "mauve decade" of the 1890s (Finlay 392). Perkin's invention, for which he received a knighthood, sparked a revolution and was followed by a rapid series of aniline dyes and pigments as rival companies competed to invent the next "it" color. The resulting decrease in prices

in for these synthetic dyes and pigments meant that color was suddenly everywhere. In the first half of the century, color had marked the elite, as dyes were expensive and only the wealthy could afford to dress and decorate their homes in color. In the second half of the century, the development of new synthetic colors worked to democratize the access to decorative color, with the result that even the poor could suddenly live in a vibrant world of color.

These technical advances in color technology resulted in several new developments in the visual arts as synthetic pigments "were rapidly adopted by the painters of the day" (Lamb and Bourriau 2). Not coincidentally, the artists who first embraced the new technologies were often the same who challenged traditional modes of representations and academic hierarchies, including those that governed drawing and color. One of the earliest ninteenth-century artists to reconsider the role of color in art was the Romantic J. M. W. Turner. Turner's painting focused on the "symbolic attributes" of color in the manner established by Goethe, whose works he read and admired. Turner believed that "colour and light are substances" derived directly from nature and therefore were proper subjects of paintings in their own right (Gage, *Meaning* 165). Turner's experimental work was followed closely by the artists of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, whose commitment to returning art to its status before the time of Raphael necessarily included a return to artistic expression before the Renaissance division of *disegno* and *colore*. Many other artistic movements challenged *disegno* indirectly by attacking the dominance of the history painting, a genre which "assert[ed] the primacy of drawing" (149). When artists such as Whistler and his Tonalists placed

emphasis on the aesthetic values of color as a viable subject matter for a painting, they undercut both historical painting's and *disegno*'s importance. The Aesthetic movement's claim of "Art for Art's Sake" functioned in much the same way. Other avant-garde groups such as the Impressionists went even further and challenged the need for drawing as a skill at all. The practice of painting *en plein air*, or out of doors, often omitted the sketching process, resulting in the artists "modeling form through color rather than line" (Helmreich 442). The technical upheavals of the visual arts of the nineteenth century challenged Academic hierarchies and raised the status of *colore*, a change that eventually lead to modernism's explosive use of color.

Having established that color has historically been ideologically conflicted and stigmatized, and that its study had been renewed with vigor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it remains to be illustrated why so many Victorian writers, who rely on language to express their ideas, would turn to color, a visual concept, in their fiction. In the Victorian era, writing and painting were often considered sister arts, with the novel considered to be the literary genre most similar to painting. As Henry James muses in *The Art of Fiction* (1884), "The analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist is, so far as I am able to see, complete" (554-5). But the "perceived intimacy between the two arts" did not always make them equals, according to Losano (5). Because painting was a well-established and prestigious art form, its elements influenced the style and form of the emerging novel, which was just beginning to be considered the equal of poetry and other genres of literatures. The novelists' adoption of realism, a movement of the arts that aimed to "give a truthful, objective and impartial

representation of the real world, based on meticulous observation of contemporary life" (Nochlin, *Realism* 13), helped to generate more prestige for the novel. However, Mack Smith argues that realism also led to a tremendous emphasis on the visual in the textual form of the novel because the "movement itself [was] grounded in painting" (243). The result, as Sophia Andres explains, was "a set of pictorial demands placed on novelists . . . They were expected to understand painterly techniques to such an extent as to be able to employ them in their narratives or, even further, to transform pictorial into narrative techniques" (xix). These techniques, thought necessary "to generate satisfactory realist texts," included the use of pictorial description, visual metaphors, ekphrasis, and what Losano calls the "lexicon," or language, of painting (6).

It is therefore no coincidence that the majority of the writers I discuss, including Brontë, Collins, Hardy, and Doyle, were either artists themselves or came from an artistic family, and therefore would have had the necessary knowledge to successfully bring painting techniques into their writing. This fact did not go unremarked by Victorian critics. When G. H. Lewes reviewed Brontë's *Jane Eyre* for *Fraser's Magazine*, he said of her style that it was as if she was "painting by words a picture that she has in her mind" (692). Critics of Hardy often spoke of his "word-painting" (Mallett 405), while a reviewer in the *Athenaeum* stated that Collins "inherited 'a painter's eye for description'" in reference to his famous artist father, while another declared that "there is something artist-like" in his writing (Dolin 7). Not only were these authors knowledgeable about the artistic techniques useful for their pictorial description, many of them were also keenly aware of the fundamental theoretical debates of the art world,

including that of color and line. In Henry James's earliest novel, *Roderick Hudson* (1875, 1883), for instance, the title character, a gifted American sculptor who has been living in Rome, experiences a sense that he has lost his way in artistic theory during a visit to Venice. Roderick feels suddenly, after spending so much time in Rome, that the "only proper" artistic expression was in the "colouring of Titian and Paul Veronese" (69). It is hardly surprising that these authors, so well versed in the visual arts, would incorporate the phenomenon of color and its ongoing investigation in painting within their writing.

While it is important to understand the philosophical debates that influence the interpretation of color in the visual arts and culture at large, it is also vital to recognize how science made use of color, which it ultimately conscripted into the service of race science. In the seventeenth century, scientists struggled to make color "controllable and measurable through optics and physics" (Pastoureau, *Black* 152). Sir Isaac Newton, for instance, not only discovered the light spectrum in the 1660s, but also established the scientific division of color into different hues: he identified exactly seven colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet) in order for his spectrum's divisions to be in harmony with the seven notes of the musical scale (Gage, *Meaning* 140). Newton's discovery was quickly followed by "an explosion in chromatic scales, charts, and samplers that declared the numbers, laws, and norms defining color's nature" (Pastoureau, *Blue* 119). It should be noted that in Newton's new scientific order, "black and white were excluded from the color universe" (119). As a result, an opposition was formed with "'in black and white' on one side, [and] 'in color' on the other" (119). This

demotion of black and white from the world of color by science also played a vital role in the social understanding of white as representing the "the absence of colour" (Dyer 45), enabling the later establishment of an uneven binary between white skin and colored skin.

Once color was successfully "domesticated" and divided into categories by Newton and his followers (Pastoureau, *Black* 152), it could serve the purpose of categorization for the later craze for scientific classification in the eighteenth century. As Pastoureau points out, color represents a particularly visual system of markers, and has therefore been used throughout history to "classify, mark, announce, connect, or divide" (*Blue* 10). As Enlightenment taxonomy moved from plants and animals to humanity, color was readily available to become a key concept in the categorization of human difference. Previously, scientists had been content with the basic distinctions of humanity made by in the classical era by Aristotle, who had divided the peoples of the earth into three distinct groups according to their climates and related skin tones. He designated the three groups as the "northern, southern, and temperate zones, which loosely corresponded to people with white, black, and light brown skin" (Wheeler 30). With the growth of classification and its emphasis on surface, however, there emerged a "new interest in describing and ordering human variety according to strictly visible physical variations" (30), which resulted in a much more detailed taxonomy of human color. Carl Linnaeus, the father of Enlightenment classification, built on the four classical temperaments to identify four varieties of humans in his 1735 *Systema Naturae*: the "*Europaeus albus, Americanus rubens, Asiatic fuscus,* and *Africanus niger*" (Withers

143). Roughly translated from the Latin, the groupings were "white European," "red American," "brown Asian," and "black African," associating each major continent with a basic color. In later editions of the text, he shifted the wording of "*Asiatic fuscus*" to "*Asiatic luridis,*" meaning yellow. Linnaeus's reliance on color as a determining factor of race set the stage for scientists for centuries to come, all of whom were eager to add their own discoveries to human taxonomy. The next to build upon his structure was German scientist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, who used the now-unattached color of brown to add a fifth type of human variety, the Malay. Blumenbach described this group as having a "tawny" skin tone, which he characterized as "mid-way between the colour of fresh mahogany and dried pinks or chesnuts" (qtd. in Mellor 5). The French Comte de Buffon increased the list further in his *Natural History*, adding "several intermediate distinctions within the black-and-white spectrum: copper, purple, tawny, olive, yellow, and brown" (Wheeler 30). This classification trajectory initiated by Enlightenment scientists carried into the nineteenth century and set the tone for color's important role in Victorian racial science and ethnology.

The development of scientific racism in the nineteenth century resulted in many new scientific techniques for the measuring of difference. As Jinny Huh claims, "Racial science became the scientific schema of seeing and categorizing race, focusing on the visual detection of differences" (Huh 555). While this schema included pseudo-sciences such as physiognomy and craniometry, it nonetheless was dominated by variants in skin color in the mold of eighteenth-century natural history. Dyer explains that this was because color "is part of the way that racial identity is thought and felt about, and is of

particular significance in a [Western] culture so bound up with the visual and the visible" (42). He continues, "In a visual culture . . . social groups must be visibly recognizable and representable, since this is a major currency of communication and power" (44). In such a way, color came to be thought of as a clear marker to represent racial distinctions in Western culture, used not only to mark those who were seen as "colored" and therefore different from Europeans, but also to establish a collective identity for Europeans, who began to see themselves as white people. Dyer points out the problematic use of this color term "white," which not only presents a homogenous category of whiteness in what is actually a population made up of many national and ethnic groupings, but also inadequately describes the range of flesh tones in a people who are neither "literally nor symbolically white" (42). The scientific insistence on "white" as the normative baseline from which to measure and, ultimately, rank human difference resulted in the conscription of color into Victorian discourses of race and empire.

Yet, even as race scientists were working to distinguish a monolithic whiteness from a variety of colored peoples, art and aesthetics were beginning to emphasize the differences within whiteness through their exploration of the nature of color. As any artist who has portrayed them on canvas knows, white people are far from white and, instead, range widely in complexions and tones that must be conveyed through colored paint. Perhaps that is why painters were among the first to question the purity of white in art, and why the artistically-inclined Victorian writers were among the first to use their writings to question the nature of whiteness, well over a generation before

modernist E. M. Forster pointed out that "the so-called white races are really pinko-gray" in *A Passage to India* (65). For example, although Goethe's *Theory of Colors* makes the connection between white as a hue and white as a skin color, it also insists on the variety of colors that make up Caucasian skin. Goethe asserts "that the white man, that is, he whose surface varies from white to reddish, yellowish, brownish, in short, whose surface appears most neutral in hue and least inclines to any particular and positive color, is the most beautiful" of all races (qtd. in Dyer 70). In the opinion of Goethe, invested as he is in the study of color, white skin is the most beautiful because it includes the multiplicity of color, and its opposite, black skin, is most homogenous in color and therefore least attractive. This reading of whiteness builds on the phrasing of Enlightenment discourse in its emphasis on the five colors of white, red, yellow, and brown of human variety as listed by Blumenbach (with whom Goethe was friendly) in order to reinforce white aesthetic superiority. Yet it also goes against common understandings of whiteness as divorced from the realm of color by suggesting that a complexion can be "reddish, yellowish, brownish" in tone and still be considered white. Perhaps this is why Englishman and later Royal Academy President Sir Charles Lock Eastlake's 1840 translation of *Theory of Colors* "qualifies Goethe's statement . . . by saying . . . 'that the white skin is more beautiful than the black, because it is more capable of indications of life, and indications of emotion'" (qtd. in Dyer 50).[6] In another example, French chemist and color theorist Chevreul, whose work heavily influenced French Neoclassical art, "wrote at length (in his 1839 *De le Loi du contrast simutané des coleurs*) of the effect of clothes of different hue on white women's coloring and in the

process specified a huge range of 'white skins' that had to be taken into account, including 'more red than rosy,' 'a tint of orange mixed with brown,' 'more yellow than orange', 'a little blue' and so on" (qtd. in Dyer 48). These artistic-minded discussions claim a multiplicity of color and its possibilities over a scientifically prescribed whiteness, a claim that Victorian writers such as Collins and Hardy would later amplify in their creative narratives of skin color transformation.

These authors' approaches to color, while informed by contemporary discourses of the visual arts as well as those of race science, are also particularly literary in their technique and execution. For instance, Victorian authors were able to make use of a series of linguistic tropes in their writing to indirectly discuss the problematic relationship between color and race in the nineteenth century. As Laura Callanan explains in *Deciphering Race: White Anxiety, Racial Conflict, and the Turn to Fiction in Mid-Victorian English Prose*, there was an extensive "series of rhetorical figures [that] developed" in the Victorian era "with which writers conveyed shorthand allusions to complex social negotiations taking place within culture" (6). The benefit of employing a trope, particularly in connection to racial discourse, was that it "allow[ed] for a certain critical distance, permitting both critic and reader to remain outside the ethically fraught situation of confronting the complexity of racist rhetoric" (16). This is precisely the opportunity offered by a discussion of Kermit's greenness as a shorthand allusion to problem of racial difference, as it allows the puppet to appeal to the viewer's empathy without directly engaging either the "racist rhetoric" or the civil rights discourses of the 1960s and '70s. The tropological use of color works similarly for the fiction writers I

discuss, who were able to carve out their own space to discuss intricate issues of biological difference outside the discipline of science. In lieu of the charts and classification schemes of race science, these writers took to the imagination and used their knowledge of the visual arts and color to envision and discuss concepts of alterity through inquiries into purpleness, blueness, redness, and yellowness. I investigate how writers were able to take "race out of the realm of biology" and create an alternative, accessible, and experimental discourse on race and identity through literary imagination and the figurative use of color (Callanan 46).

Specifically, the use of color in these fictions resembles the metonym, a particularly open-ended trope, which, unlike the metaphor, does not directly state the connection between two objects being compared. Instead, the metonym "relies wholly upon those relations between objects that are *habitually* and *conventionally* known and accepted," making its meaning a challenge to recover outside of its intended time and culture (Bredin qtd. in Freedgood 12). It is also, as Freedgood explains, indefinite and therefore difficult to contain. She states, "Metaphor defines and stabilizes; metonymy keeps on going, in any and all directions. It threatens: to disrupt categories, to open up too many possibilities, to expose things hidden" (14). Metonym is socially disruptive, leading critics to associate metonym with feminine and queer forces (Freedgood 13-14), much as Batchelor assigns these same forces to color's multifaceted cultural meanings (22-23).

As this similarity demonstrates, the metonymical use of color has the ability to intensify the many meanings of otherness that color already carries in Western culture.

As Batchelor points out, "colour has regularly been linked with other better-documented sexual and racial phobias," and its appearance in Victorian fiction can work to suggest these cultural fears. These connections between color and forms of difference or perceived deviance resulted in color being associated with "the 'wrong' end" of nearly every important Western ideological opposition (29), including those of masculine/feminine, occident/orient, civilized/primitive, mature/infantile, tasteful/vulgar, straight/queer, and healthy/pathological (22-3). Although Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has made a convincing argument that the "homo/heterosexual definition has been a presiding master term of the past century" (11), I would like to suggest that non-color/color, and its associated white/colored, is also a vital governing social binary that should not be overlooked by scholars. Like the homo/hetero binary division, the non-colored/color opposition has as much "primary importance for all modern Western identity and social organization . . . as do the more traditionally visible cruxes of gender, class, and race" (11). Color functions as a key to defining one's position within these "traditional cruxes," because, as attested by these Victorian texts, once a person is associated with color, it is a very short step to other types of racial, class, and gender-based othering. For example, Hardy's Diggory Venn, in shifting from whiteness to redness through his interaction with reddle pigment, becomes orientalized in spite of his English birth, feminized despite his male status, and ostracized by the lowest classes regardless of his being "decently born and brought up" (*Return* 71). Similarly, it is a slippery slope from "colorful" to "childlike," "queer," or "mad," as is illustrated by Brontë's Bertha Mason. In *Jane Eyre*, Bertha's purple coloring suggests her racial otherness, as well as her

socially deviant behavior: she violates gender and class expectations in her behavior, morals, and physical appearance. However, it also associates her with madness, the supernatural, and the bestial throughout the novel. As these fictional examples make clear, the tropological use of color is a particularly diverse way of figuring alterity that can reference a complex and interconnected set of social binaries. While these depictions of difference go well beyond racial lines, they are governed by what we might call, in borrowing from Sedgwick, the "master term" of the white/colored binary. These Victorian novels indicate that the shift from whiteness to coloredness unleashes the nearly infinite possibilities of othering enabled by the literary uses of language.

This particularly nineteenth-century use of color as a literary othering technique builds on history of othering throughout Western literature. Clement Hawes has traced narrative depictions of Western interaction with global others, identifying a pattern of what he calls "fantastic alterity" (440). According to Hawes, "Ancient travel literature is full of monstrous ethnic 'Others,' from doglike men who bark rather than speak to cyclopean beings, from men with eyes in their shoulders to hermaphroditic or pygmy communities" (440). In the eighteenth century, Hawes finds several new topoi of alterity in narratives that derive from the increasingly scientific and capitalist nature of the colonial project and global exploration, including "cannibalism, abasement, display, exotic-pet status, filthiness, pendulous breasts (a misogynist inflection of ethnic defamation), and kinship with apes" (440). While many of these "hyperbolic" narrative strategies for othering continue to exist in the nineteenth century (441), I would argue that not enough attention has been paid to the role of color as a potential topos of

"fantastic alterity." If the eighteenth century relied on the shape, size, or sexualization of exotic bodies (for instance, in the fascination with hermaphrodites and pygmies), then the turn to color—in particular fantastic skin colors—could be a fresh way to characterize the nineteenth century vision of the Other.

Of course, there are many ways in which authors can explore and mark otherness, but color may be one technique that has yet to be thoroughly explored by literary critics. One of the primary purposes of this work is to illustrate the undervalued role that color plays in the literary presentation of alterity. These authors' depictions of fantastic skin color tap into the socially suspect aspects of color and its association with racial and cultural other. They also draw on the cultural developments of the nineteenth century, illustrating where the scientific desire to categorize human racial difference intersects with the philosophical and artistic reevaluation of color in progress over the course of the century. While the authors' use of color externalizes difference in order to mark it, their depictions of skin color transformations also complicates the claim of scientific racism that "fixed" and external "racial characteristics" such as skin color can "reveal the inward nature of the individual or population in question" (Augstein x). In these novels, color becomes a sign of difference and alterity whose meanings extend beyond race and biology into the realm of culture.

This dissertation provides an interdisciplinary reading of nineteenth-century British fiction by uniting the cultural history of color with English literary studies. The chapters are organized thematically by hue to aid the exploration of each individual color's meanings within this larger pattern of figurative skin color. Within these

chromatic groupings, the ordering of the chapters abides by the chronological sequence of the texts' publication to follow the development of figurative color as the century progresses. Even as the Victorian era gave way to the twentieth century, examples of fantastically colored characters in the fiction of the 1890s and early 1900s demonstrate that figurative skin color outlasts its original circumstances in Victorian fiction. Simultaneously, this chronological ordering also traces the influence of the development of the British Empire and its aide, racial science, on fiction throughout the nineteenth century. The texts discussed follow an arc that illustrates a mistrust of the Other marked by color in the early Victorian period, a brief and somewhat sympathetic exploration of the experience of the Other through skin color change in the mid-Victorian years, and finally, a suspicious retreat from the Other at the turn of the century in the shadow of imperial decline and impending World War.

The first chapter, "Purple," focuses on Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), exploring how the artist-protagonist Jane combines the aesthetic and moral discourses of color with those of race to paint her rival, Bertha Mason, as a purple-colored madwoman from the West Indies. This early and particularly well-known Victorian text offers a clear example of figurative skin color being used to mark and exile the Other in fiction, but I also illustrate that skin color is only one aspect of a much larger semiotic system of color that also uses art and fashion to redistribute power in the novel according to the gender, class, and racial hierarchies favored by the author and the protagonist.

The second chapter, "Blue," discusses Wilkie Collins's *Poor Miss Finch* (1872), in which the skin of a young English gentleman, Oscar Dubourg, turns a livid blue as a

side effect of the silver nitrate in his medication. Unlike Brontë's novel, which uses color to divide and rank characters, Collins's work considers the perspective of the Other through the blue Oscar's transition from social belonging to otherness. I set Collins's choice of blue in the context of the mid-century reevaluation of the role of color in the visual arts through a discussion of the Pre-Raphaelite artistic movement and the aesthetic theory of its champion John Ruskin. By illustrating the many connections between the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Ruskinian aesthetics, and Collins's novel, I trace Collins's shift from his early presentation of light/dark hierarchies in works such as *The Woman in White* (1860) and *Black and White* (1869) to a full-scale evaluation of the discursive connections between color, art, and difference in his later work *Poor Miss Finch.*

In Chapter III, "Red," I analyze the figure of the reddleman Diggory Venn in Thomas Hardy's *The Return of the Native* (1878). In the novel, Diggory's skin has turned a bright vermilion shade through his contact with reddle, an iron-oxide pigment that he sells to farmers for marking their sheep. Like Collins, Hardy was an amateur artist whose interest in avant-garde coloring techniques led him to turn to color to explore the experience of the Other. Within the text, Diggory's color change symbolizes his challenge to social authority through his nomadic lifestyle that defies class divisions and transgresses racial boundaries. Yet the novel also seems to resist Diggory's capacity for textual disruption, returning him to whiteness as well as a fixed gender and class position in the final chapters. I explore this contradictory treatment of the reddleman through the paradigm of Batchelor's "chromophobia" and "chromophilia," arguing that while Hardy indulges his love of color through the painterly descriptions and political

implications of Diggory's redness, the author also exhibits a latent fear of color and otherness representative of his particular socio-historical position.

The last chapter discusses the color yellow in Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes mystery "The Yellow Face" (1894) and Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel *The Secret Garden* (1911), both of which portray the yellow-tinted skin of their characters as the negative consequence of interaction with other races and countries. These two works use the gendered bodies of little girls in order to portray the young and the innocent as the collateral damage of empire, reflecting the imperial anxiety that characterizes the fin de siècle and the transition to the Modernist period. This chapter illustrates a move away from the sympathetic explorations of Hardy and Collins, with Doyle and Burnett returning to the uses of color to mark otherness presented in *Jane Eyre* early in the Victorian era. These later works also shift from artistic discourses to the scientific discussions of degeneration and detection to express growing racial fears in British society in the years leading up to the First World War.

By reading these fictional works through the lens of color, "Color and the Other: The Aesthetics of Difference in the Victorian Novel" reveals a new literary register through which to examine and identify the discursive power of color in maintaining and challenging social hierarchies. Recovering the cultural and symbolic meanings of color as preserved in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fiction can also deepen our understanding of the complex historical entanglement of color, skin, and race, a vital task in a twenty-first century that continues to blur the distinctions between skin color and racial identity.

CHAPTER II

PURPLE: CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S *JANE EYRE*

In addition to comparing Bertha Mason to a ghost, a goblin, and a wild beast, *Jane Eyre*'s narrator describes her—twice—as being strangely "purple" (242, 250). Critics have given much attention to the othering of Bertha, Rochester's supposedly mad first wife, with feminist and postcolonial critics attempting over the past few decades to liberate her character from the narrative's scapegoating practices. Yet author Charlotte Brontë's decided emphasis on Bertha's unnatural skin color has received relatively little attention, perhaps because the references to Bertha's purple face are generally assumed to be exaggerated or merely figurative. But what if we took the color purple seriously? What could a study of purple tell us about Brontë's assumptions, about the gender, class, and racial politics of the novel?

The postcolonial reclamation of Bertha as a victim of British colonial exploitation has focused chiefly on her position as a Creole heiress from Jamaica, imprisoned in her English husband's estate. In an effort to contextualize the history that informs the novel's depiction of Bertha, critics have amassed a wealth of research concerning nineteenth-century colonial and patriarchal practices. Yet this urge to historicize Bertha has resulted in a critical debate that focuses too narrowly on securing a reading of her racial origins. Because "Creole" was an ambiguous term in the nineteenth century,[7] critics have alternately read Bertha as white, native, interracial, degenerated, and of African descent.[8] The obvious confusion of these competing claims illustrates

that none of these arguments quite knows what to make of Bertha's racial characterization, nor the ambiguity that arises from her description as purple. While the novel makes many gestures towards Bertha's potential blackness, the narrative itself falls short of declaring her black, halting instead at purple. Rather than providing a historical reading of Bertha's race, this chapter takes a different approach in analyzing the linguistic and symbolic work of color, particularly the color purple, in *Jane Eyre*. Although Bertha's purple complexion encompasses the racial connotations that these critics have discussed, it also provides an ambiguous multiplicity that allows Brontë to reference alternative discourses of the humors and the supernatural, as well as tap into the complex but indeterminate web of cultural and symbolic meanings assigned to colors in every society.

In approaching a discussion of color in *Jane Eyre*, I begin by asking: Where does color appear in the text, and what work is it doing? Color repeatedly appears in order to be negatively associated with the female, the wealthy, and the Oriental. It represents immoral luxury, in the form of material goods and cosmetic beauty, and is used by author and narrator to limit the power of the novel's upper-class women, including Blanche Ingram, Rosamond Oliver, the Reed women, and Bertha Mason. Color constitutes a semiotic system that includes characterization through art, clothing, and skin colors. In the novel's skin color hierarchy, the color of the characters' skin marks their moral values by drawing on nineteenth-century racial binaries that align whiteness with virtue and darkness with iniquity, and then expanding them to include skin of yellow and purple hues. Ultimately, this color system operates primarily to redistribute

power in the novel according to the new gender, class, and racial hierarchies favored by Brontë and her alter ego Jane Eyre.

Art

One of the primary ways in which Jane is able to participate in the joys of color is through her artwork. Unlike the wealthier characters that she encounters, Jane has little access to the world of decorative color in the form of bright clothing or ornamental furnishings. However, Jane is able to take pleasure in artistic color, because, like her author before her, she has been educated in the expected feminine accomplishments and excels in drawing and painting. Jane's art becomes a lens through which she sees and understands the world, and she often applies the lessons of her artistic training to the world around her.[9] For instance, Jane's narrative often emulates the art world's low estimation of color, which was placed lowest on the academic hierarchy of artistic elements. This artistic devaluation of color, in turn, derives from larger cultural and religious suspicions of color as seductive and dangerous. As the narrator of her own story, Jane's use of color reflects these cultural prejudices, as she indulges in color through her art, but avoids the association of her self with color. Instead, her narrative assigns the moral censure of color to those female characters with whom she must compete for male companionship and financial security, reserving the moral and artistic high ground, that of the monochrome, for herself. These contrasting desires within Jane, who yearns for artistic freedom and passion (artistic Jane) but often acquiesces to repressive social expectations of Protestant morality (plain Jane), can be seen as a larger

contradiction within Brontë's structuring of the novel between romanticism and realism. Brontë's novel appears to want the world of color, as envisioned in the Romantic and Gothic aspects of the book, but also desires the moral power of truth telling claimed by the realist movement. This conflict is framed by Brontë's personal writings, which use the language of color to structure a debate between the desirable but dishonest imaginative world and a dull but morally superior reality.

The cultural suspicion of color can be traced back to the classical preference of line (*disegno*) over color (*colore*) in artistic creation. As I noted in the introduction to the present work, line was considered by Aristotle to be "the repository of thought in art," according to David Batchelor, and therefore was traditionally representative of the masculine and rational (28-29); conversely, color was relegated to the senses and continually associated with "the feminine, the oriental, the primitive, the infantile, the vulgar, the queer or the pathological" (22-23). The unequal binary opposition of line and color in Europe was further exaggerated by the events of Protestant Reformation, which launched a "war against images" in the sixteenth century (Pastoureau, *Blue* 100). The Reformation's iconoclasm was accompanied by what color historian Michel Pastoureau refers to as a "chromoclasm" that viewed color as representative of "luxury, artifice, and illusion" (*Blue* 100, 107). As a result of this "chromatic Puritanism," "bright colors—considered dishonest and unworthy of true Christians—were totally excluded from clothing, daily life, art, and religious practices" in parts of Northern Europe (*Blue* 107, 102). In art, the Reformation resulted in a distinctly "Protestant palette" characterized by "soberness, aversion to stark contrasts, somber tones, grisaille,

[and] monochromatic effects (notably with blues and grays)," as well as a general "color asceticism" illustrated by artists such as Rembrandt (*Blue* 107). Like Batchelor, Pastoureau finds negative portrayals of color "repeated over and over" throughout European history; the message is that color "is vain because it is mere matter; dangerous, because it deviates from the true and good; blameworthy, because it seduces and deceives" (*Blue* 107).

Brontë's treatment of color in her novel reflects this classical and religious censure of color, yet her depictions of Jane's artwork also illustrate a desire for the imaginative possibilities of color. In fact, both Brontë and her protagonist illustrate signs of Batchelor's "chromophobia," the fear of color, and "chromophilia," an attraction to color, present in Western culture. Batchelor reads the expulsion and embrace of color as two sides of the same coin, in that "Chromophobia recognizes the otherness of color but seeks to play it down, while chromophilia recognizes the otherness of color and plays it up" (70). Batchelor's illustration of the othering of color and the unequal binaries of chromophobia and chromophilia in Western civilization emphasizes the ordering potential of color and the uneven power distribution in which any cultural treatment of color participates. This historical understanding of Western culture's chromophobia helps to illuminate the underlying aims of *Jane Eyre*, itself an artistic creation that is highly interested in the workings of power, particularly with who has power and how it should be redistributed. The novel embarks on a project to restructure power along class and gender lines, yet Brontë's use of color's discursive power to reorder the world in Jane's interests has gone relatively unrecognized by critics

and readers. Although the discussion of color in Jane's artwork in the text illustrates a certain amount of chromophilia, it also exemplifies chromophobia in its strategic deployment of color as Jane uses her paintings to assign the accusation of color to other women while resisting the association of color with herself.

The treatment of color in *Jane Eyre* most likely reflects the limited artistic training that the author and her sisters received in their youth. Although Brontë, like her brother Branwell, entertained ambitions of becoming a professional artist, she received the conventional and insufficient artistic education designed to fit girls for polite society. Drawing manuals of the time meant for women emphasized copying professional works to master drawing, rather than encouraging artistic creativity or personal expression. They promoted "progressive lessons" in the use of materials, recommending that students begin working with pencil, before moving on to ink, sepia, and last, color (Alexander and Sellars 45). Brontë's artwork from Roe Head School illustrates that she adhered to this strict pattern in her youth, not even advancing as far as sepia during her schooldays (45). As a result, though Brontë owned and used watercolors, she would have had very little access to formal training in their use.[10] Similarly, she would have had little recourse to studying their use in professional artwork because of the family's limited means and isolated location in Yorkshire; she would have relied instead on viewing engravings of famous paintings, which were commonly produced in black and white.[11] Most widely available theoretical discussions on painting, such as Sir Joshua Reynolds' popular *Discourses* (a late eighteenth-century text that was "still the bible of academic English art practice" in the mid-nineteenth century), also downplayed the

importance of color in art (Dolin 8). Reynolds' work recommended that artists avoid "a variety of tints" and favor the "quietness and simplicity" produced by subtle and "uniform" coloring (121). It is not surprising, therefore, that Brontë's descriptions of her heroine's art would betray an interest in the imaginative color denied to the author, but would also reflect the low value placed on color in the polite artistic education.

This conflicted understanding of color is visible in the description provided of Jane's portfolio paintings, three of which receive extensive treatment in the novel. These watercolors, which Jane produces at Lowood and later displays at Rochester's request, feature rich dark color schemes and are heavily influenced by "apocalyptic sublime" and "orientalist exocticism" of Romantic art (Kromm 379). Jane Kromm explains that each painting features a "disturbing . . . dead, fragmented, or cropped figure" (380), combined with a seascape, landscape, or polarscape. The backgrounds of these watercolors are heavily dominated by green and blue, the colors of nature favored by the German Romantics (Pastoureau, *Blue* 132), with the first painting consisting of a cormorant, a bracelet, and dead arm dominated by a sea of "green water," and the second of a woman's bust, pictured over a grassy hill in an "expanse of sky, dark blue as at twilight" (Brontë 107). The last, the polarscape, provides the sharp contrast of the white polar landscape with the black oriental elements of the "sable veil" and "turban" of a colossal head, but color resides here as well, in a "muster of northern lights [that] reared their dim lances" in the sky above (107). The colorful, inventive nature of these paintings, so unlike the art produced by Brontë herself,[12] illustrates that Jane's imagination expresses itself in both form and color.

Yet the pleasure of color in these paintings is a guilty pleasure for Jane, who justifies her use of color through the painting's Eastern elements. The figures, in particular, are associated with "the exotic eastern accouterments, the turbans, jewels, diadems, and diaphanous dresses" of the Orientalist genre (Kromm 379). Jane's narrative description of these elements emphasizes their exquisite coloring, as Jane depicts "a gold bracelet, set with gems, that I had touched with as *brilliant* tints as my palette could yield, and as *glittering* distinctness as my pencil could impart" (Brontë 107, emphasis added). Yet the brilliant color in the painting, however pleasing, also constitutes an accusation of luxury, as the colorful bracelet, in the beak of a cormorant, has been plucked from the disembodied arm of a drowned woman. The corpse's bracelet, a luxurious ornament of beauty in life, is shown to be worthless in her death, where only the spirit maintains value. Likewise, in the next painting, Jane has outlined a "woman's shape to the bust, portrayed in *tints as dusk and soft as I could combine*" (107, emphasis added). The woman, alluded to by Jane as "the Evening Star," is also orientalized by her "dark and wild" eyes and "stream[ing]" hair (107); while beautiful, she is also condemned for her sensuality, argues Kromm, as her features invoke both "ecstasy" and "madness" (381).[13] This approach of associating color with Oriental wealth and sensuality allows Jane to take pleasure in color in her art while recognizing and distancing herself from its socially censurable qualities.

Jane negotiates the binary between chromophobia and chromophilia by displacing the desire for color onto other women, from the drowned owner of the bejeweled bracelet to the Evening Star, while asserting a monochrome morality for

herself, the self-described "plain, Quakerish" Jane who dresses in black and gray (Brontë 220). This pattern of linking color to a lack of morality is repeated throughout the narrative and applied to its characters: Blanche Ingram, a rival for Rochester's affections, and Rosamond Oliver, a love interest of St. John Rivers, are associated with color not only in the narrative description of their dress and manners, but also in the portraits of both that Jane paints. Jane executes vibrant, lavishly colored portraits of her rivals (and class superiors) Blanche and Rosamond, while sketching herself and her lover Rochester in monochromatic restraint. The extensive use of color in the paintings gives Jane a vicarious pleasure, but also suggests a luxurious sensuality that Jane enjoys denouncing in her rivals. Although Jane employs color to promote the values and welfare of the marginalized middle-class woman, her quest for economic and social equality is often advanced at the expense of the other women in the text, particularly those from the upper classes.[14] The use of color in the novel illustrates the limited nature of the feminist and class politics of the novel, which attacks upper-class women and virtually ignores everyone from the lower classes.

One of these privileged rivals is Rosamond Oliver, the young heiress at Morton, who is described by Jane as possessing "a face of perfect beauty" (309). In Jane's description, Rosamond's beauty derives from her colorful complexion, a combination of the "pure hues of rose and lily" (309). Jane comments that the lily white coloring of Rosamond's skin "adds such repose to the livelier beauties of tint and ray" to be found in her rosy cheeks, "ruddy" lips, and "dark" eyes (309). When asked to paint Rosamond's portrait, Jane reports that she "felt a thrill of artist-delight at the idea of copying from so

perfect and radiant a model" (314). In her excitement, Jane quickly completes the initial sketching of Rosamond's miniature, but postpones the coloring process, telling the reader, "I promised myself the pleasure of colouring it" later (314). On the next school holiday, Jane indulges herself by coloring the portrait:

> [I] fell to the more soothing . . . occupation, of completing Rosamond Oliver's miniature . . . there was but the background *to tint* and the drapery *to shade* off; a touch of *carmine*, too, to add to the ripe lips—a soft curl here and there to the tresses—a deeper tinge to the shadow of the lash under the *azured* eyelid. I was absorbed in the execution of these nice details. (315, emphasis added)

The great joy that Jane takes in painting the miniature of Rosamond has been noted by critics; for instance, Mary A. Armstrong comments on "the revealing repetition of the word 'pleasure' that surrounds the process" of producing the painting (119). Armstrong reads this scene as representative of the "female homoerotic gaze" (120); it also illustrates Jane's sensual connection to the feminine aspects of color. The "thrill of artist-delight" that Jane finds in painting Rosamond is actually the joy of painting Rosamond's colors (Brontë 314).

Rosamond is the vehicle for color in Jane's artwork, but she does not fare well in the exchange, as Jane also uses color as a weapon to undermine Rosamond's wealth and beauty. Jane's painting associates Rosamond not only with color, but also with the cosmetic. The mention of her "carmine" lips and "azured eyelid" combines the artistic discussion of Jane's paintbox with the luxurious and false colors of cosmetics (316).[15]

Jacqueline Lichtenstein explains that ever since Plato equated cosmetics with the lie,[16] Western civilization has been the heir of a "righteous alliance" of "moral puritanism and aesthetic austerity" that aligns the "colorless" with that which is "true, beautiful, and good" (42), leaving color and the cosmetic to be negatively associated with surface and artifice. By referencing Rosamond's carmine and azure features, Jane implies that the colorful Rosamond possesses an artificial and therefore surface-level beauty that contrasts with Jane's spiritual depth. Jane's accusation of color is reinforced by her description of Rosamond as a "coquettish," "vain," "unthinking," and "not profoundly interesting" girl, comparable to the young and vapid Adèle Varens (Brontë 313-14). Jane's harsh assessment of Rosamond's character, combined with the moral accusation of cosmetic color, emphasizes that the pretty Rosamond is no equal to plain Jane.

Perhaps because it is Jane's narrative, St. John Rivers seems to agree, and although he nurses a deep passion for Rosamond, he is determined to marry the moral and dependable Jane. In this scenario, the colorful Rosamond represents the seductive, sensual dangers of color, in particular its narcotic qualities that Aristotle first decried when he referred to color as *pharmakon* or a drug (Batchelor 31). The classically educated St. John follows suit, describing Rosamond's influence over him as a "delicious poison," which causes a "delirium," "delusion," and a "fever of the flesh" (Brontë 318-9). St. John gives in to the temptation of Rosamond's colorful beauty for a "quarter of an hour," which he spends admiring her portrait's "very soft, clear colouring" and imagining a domestic scene in which Rosamond's "coral lips" smile at him (Brontë 316, 318). However, St. John is determined not to fall prey to Rosamond's "sensual

snare" (Garson 264); he describes her "offers" as "false" (Brontë 318). St. John's description of Rosamond as narcotic and his focus on her colorful complexion, lips, and eyes in the portrait suggests that he knows that Rosamond's color represents all about her that is other: through her colorful depiction, Rosamond imbibes in the novel all the negative meanings that Batchelor has isolated as historically associated with color: "the feminine, oriental, cosmetic, infantile, vulgar, [and] narcotic" (Batchelor 71). If painting Rosamond provides an outlet for Jane's artistic chromophilia, it also subjects Rosamond to the censure of Jane and St. John's chromophobia, which causes them to fear and reject her. Jane eliminates Rosamond as a rival for St. John's affections by associating Rosamond with color through the painting of her portrait, and then Jane dismisses Rosamond from the story altogether. After this scene and her rejection by St. John, Rosamond does not reappear in the course of the narrative action.

Jane has previously used this narrative strategy of associating her rival with the dangerous aspects of color when she was confronted with a more serious opponent, the wealthy and beautiful Blanche Ingram. Jane uses the unequal binary of line and color in her art to undermine the powerful claims of social status and feminine accomplishments that Blanche possesses and to dismiss her, despite their similar rank and upbringing, as a suitable match for Rochester. However, because these protests are rendered artistically rather than verbally, Jane's actions appear, on the surface, to respect the relative class positions between herself and Blanche. In a memorable scene, after Jane first learns from Mrs. Fairfax of Rochester's potential interest in Blanche, Jane portrays her own attempt to discipline herself for loving the wealthy and perhaps unobtainable Rochester.

Jane selects as punishment a self-flagellation of an emotional, artistic sort: she tells herself, "Listen, then, Jane Eyre, to your sentence: to-morrow, place the glass before you, and draw in chalk your own picture, faithfully; without softening one defect: omit no harsh line, smooth away no displeasing irregularity; write under it, 'Portrait of a Governess, disconnected, poor, and plain'" (137). In one sense, Jane is sentencing herself to a harsh aesthetic realism, reinforcing the "truth" of her poor, plain status in artistic form. This portrait, in which she sees herself as an "indigent and insignificant plebian" (137), appears to be a humble and pious acceptance of her low social status and a successful, if harsh, attempt at the self-regulation and discipline necessary for maintaining any sense of self-worth as a poor woman in a class-based society.

Jane's second step in her self-punishment, in which she wallows in the imaginary Blanche's beauty and power, seems designed to win the reader's sympathy for the poor narrator. Jane finds a morbid gratification in her depiction of the unknown Blanche, who becomes a blank slate of ideal feminine beauty for the artist. She orders herself, "take your palette, *mix your freshest, finest, clearest tints*; choose your most delicate camel-hair pencils; delineate carefully the loveliest face you can imagine; *paint it in your softest shades and sweetest hues*, according to the description given by Mrs. Fairfax of Blanche Ingram" (137, emphasis added). Jane's description, with its repeated emphasis on mixing colors, primarily works to associate Blanche's beauty with the corrupting influence of color, just as she did in portraying the portrait of Rosamond. It makes a moral accusation through its use of the Orientalism artistic genre:

> remember the raven ringlets, the Oriental eye. . . . Recall the august yet harmonious lineaments, the Grecian neck and bust: let the round and dazzling arm be visible, and the delicate hand; omit neither the diamond ring nor gold bracelet; portray faithfully the attire, aerial lace and glistening satin, graceful scarf and golden rose: call it 'Blanche, an accomplished lady of rank.' (137)

This imagining of Blanche recalls the earlier Evening Star and the other paintings from Lowood with their disembodied busts and arms, ornate jewelry, and fine textiles. It invokes not only Jane's earlier indulgence in the Oriental pleasures of the east, but also her occidental righteousness that decries the indolence of Eastern luxuries. The recurrent moral charge against Eastern idleness in Brontë's works has been clearly delineated by several critics,[17] but the accusation depends not only on oppositions of the West versus East, or the poor versus the rich, but also upon the less publicized artistic binary of monochrome drawing versus color painting. Just as in describing the painting of Rosamond's portrait, Jane's narration heavily emphasizes the coloring of Blanche's portrait, and it is clear that Jane finds a painful enjoyment in painting the beautiful Blanche that is not found in the creation of her own self-portrait. Yet looked at from an artistic viewpoint, the emphasis on Blanche's color allows Jane partially to reverse the class hierarchy of British society by placing herself and her self-portrait higher up in the moral and artistic hierarchies.

Jane's own portrait is not produced in color; instead, it is sketched in "chalk" (137).[18] Its depiction emphasizes the skills needed to produce a realistic, truthful image

through drawing, capitalizing not only on the moral prestige of monochrome depiction but also that of the rising movement of realism. Although it is true that the artistic hierarchy of genres, which promoted history painting and portraiture over landscape and still life, guaranteed a higher place for the finished, colored oil painting than the black and white sketch in exhibition, the artistic world nonetheless valued the skills of sketching over those of coloring. Batchelor explains the historical presence of a "hierarchical ordering within [the skills of] painting which . . . describes a descent from 'invention' through 'design' to 'chiaroscuro' and, finally, to 'color'" (29). Jane's self-portrait emphasizes both design (drawing and composition) in its sketching and her skill in chiaroscuro (shading). Light and dark shading, in particular, was considered "fashionable in early nineteenth-century amateur drawing" and Brontë's own artwork contains a "considerable amount" (Alexander and Sellars 46).[19] In contrast to Jane's sketched self-portrait, the lengthy description of Blanche's portrait focuses on the careful mixing of the "tints" and "hues" (Brontë 137), or the lowest rank skills of coloring.[20] Furthermore, both design and chiaroscuro were traditionally esteemed as more masculine and rational, while color was viewed as feminine and therefore inferior (Batchelor 28-9). In the contrast between Jane's monochromic self-portrait and her watercolor miniature of Blanche, Jane's representation of her self draws on the artistic and masculine capital of line and shading, while her wealthy rival is depicted in vivid, Orientalized, and feminine color.

Naturally, when Jane later sketches Rochester's portrait while whiling away the hours on her visit to Gateshead, she does so in black and white. The narration of this

artistic work also emphasizes line and omits color: "I took a soft black pencil, gave it a broad point, and worked away. Soon I had *traced* on the paper a broad and prominent forehead and a square lower outline of visage: *that contour gave me pleasure;* my fingers proceeded actively to fill it with features" (Brontë 199, emphasis added). She deftly sketches a realistic portrait of Rochester's physiognomy, paying careful attention to the shape and aspect of his brow, nose, mouth, and chin. She leaves his eyes "to the last, because *they required the most careful working*. *I drew them large; I shaped them well*: the eyelashes I traced long and sombre; the irids lustrous and large" (199, emphasis added). The repetition of the language of tracing, contouring, filling, defining, drawing, shaping, and careful working all emphasize the importance of line in artistic creation. Jane's narration also stresses the skills of shading and chiaroscuro needed to provide a quality portrait: "'Good! but not quite the thing,' I thought, as I surveyed the effect: 'they want more force and spirit;' and I wrought the shades blacker, that the lights might flash more brilliantly—a happy touch or two secured success" (199). This portrait mirrors the qualities of Jane's own portrait, emphasizing the necessity of harsh aesthetic truth over the presentation of beauty; Jane does not soften Rochester's personal defects, and Georgiana, in viewing the sketch, declares Rochester "an ugly man" (199). Essentially, Jane creates a matched set of portraits of herself and Rochester, presented in a discussion that privileges the skill of realistic drawing over the pleasure of imaginative color.

In a larger sense, the presentation of Jane's artwork also illustrates two warring styles of art contemporary to *Jane Eyre*'s creation—romanticism and realism—as

tension reflected within Brontë's construction of the narrative itself. The text balances uneasily not only between artistic movements, but also between the waning literary romanticism of Brontë's youth and the burgeoning literary realism of the Victorian period. Brontë and her text seem to be caught between dueling desires for romantic passion and imagination and the moral power of realism's truth-telling project. Drawing on the rhetoric of the early romantics, this battle is phrased in the language of color in Brontë's correspondence after the publication of *Jane Eyre*.

Through the lens of color, many of the internal tensions of the novel can be re-imagined as the avowal and disavowal of color in Jane's struggles with chromophobia and chromophilia. The clear contradictions in Jane's character, so famously outlined by critics and often apparent even to the casual reader, have been isolated and expressed many times over: Sally Shuttleworth discusses the battle between the "individual psyche" and the "social and political" requirements of a civil society (3), Heather Glen speaks of Jane as a "figure of both romantic self-assertion and of evangelical self-immolation" (64), and Terry Eagleton describes all of Brontë's novels as "strategies for reconciling the conflicting set of values . . . of [the] divided selves—[of] women who are outwardly demure yet inwardly passionate, full of an erotic and imaginative hungering which must be locked back upon itself in meekness, self-sacrifice, and stoical endurance" (*English Novel* 129). By shifting perspectives, these contradictions can be viewed as manifestations of the novel's struggles with color, as the chromophobic side of Jane attempts to resist the pleasures and temptations of color, while her chromophilic and artistic self rebels against the tedium of monochromatic conformity.

Similarly, Brontë's struggles with controlling the formal aspects of the novel can also be seen in the light of the chromophobia/chromophilia contradiction. Critics often attribute a lack of narrative coherence to the novel because of its multiple plot lines and structural elements: Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak refers to "the tangent narrative . . . of St. John Rivers" which "escapes the closed circle of the *narrative* conclusion" ("Three" 247-48, emphasis original), while Glen points out the "two opposing and incommensurate" stories of the text (64). These structural infelicities are often connected to the more "colorful" Gothic portions of the novel; for example, Elaine Freedgood speaks of the "Gothic eruption[s]" of "this most improbably plotted of realist novels" (32). Brontë's text is caught between two narrative possibilities: the romantic excess of the artist-protagonist, with her Byronic hero and his gothic household, and the nascent movement of realism, which Brontë herself promoted in *The Professor*, stating that "Novelists should never allow themselves to weary of the study of real life" (186). Yet despite her claims to realism, Brontë was never successful in banishing her romantic propensities. George Levine sums it up thus: "Charlotte Brontë's imagination, despite her longing after the study of 'real life,' felt experience with too much . . . intensity to allow her to settle for the moderat[ion]" required by a strict adherence to "the realist's creed" (182). This struggle to find a balance between two modes of literary expression, visible in Brontë's works and documented in her private letters, was conceived, in part, as a struggle for "color" in the narrative. Brontë herself makes this connection, pitting "color" and "imagination" against "realism" and its perceived "truth."

This desire for literary color draws on the rhetoric of the Romantic Movement. In the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, the manifesto of English Romanticism, William Wordsworth states: "The principal object . . . was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them, throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men; and, at the same time, to throw over them *a certain colouring of imagination*, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way" (142-43, emphasis added). This discussion, while laying the groundwork for realism in its emphasis on "common life" and ordinary language, also insists on the necessity of "imagination" to create an "interest" that is distinctly literary. This use of imagination is understood by means of the language of color, whereby Wordsworth's "colouring" figuratively means "To embellish, set off in rhetorical colours" ("Colour," def. 2), an element necessary to create a "colorful" work that is "full of interest, excitement, force" ("Colourful," def. 1). Color comes to mean all that is imaginative and lively, and even literary, in romanticism.

These romantic values contrast with those of the later movement of realism, which aimed to "give a truthful, objective and impartial representation of the real world, based on meticulous observation of contemporary life" (Nochlin, *Realism* 13). Because Realism applied a moral value to the truth-telling aspect of realism, creative license was seen in close approximation to lying; for example, George Henry Lewes described the antithesis of realism as not "Idealism, but Falsism" (qtd. in Nochlin, *Realism* 3). As Levine concludes, "in requiring the validation of imagination in the visible world . . .

realism posits a tension between imagination . . . and reality" (18), a tension that could be interpreted as censuring creativity.

Published in 1847, *Jane Eyre* and its writer are caught between the two movements. On the one hand, to be a colorful writer is to be uncomfortably close to being a liar or "coloring" the truth; on the other hand, too much devotion to realism's tenets risks a loss of interest and excitement for the reader. Brontë's letters, particularly her exchanges with Lewes over *Jane Eyre*, illustrate her familiarity with this difficulty; furthermore, they are couched in the language of color. In his positive review of the novel for *Fraser's Magazine*, Lewes writes, "Reality—deep, significant reality—is the great characteristic of the book . . . the authoress is unquestionably setting forth her own experience" (691). However, Lewes also censures any derivation from the realistic form, citing as a "defect" the Gothic-influenced sections of the novel. He states, "There is, indeed, too much melodrama and improbability, which smack of the circulating library,—we allude particularly to the mad wife and all that relates to her" (446). Brontë was grateful for the praise, but also bristled a little at Lewes's determined insistence on realism; she writes to Lewes that although "You warn me to beware of Melodrame and you exhort me to adhere to the real," she has found it difficult to strictly follow this advice (qtd. in Mar. Smith 90). In the letter, Brontë describes how she struggled in creating *The Professor* "to take Nature and Truth as my sole guides and to follow in their very footprints" only to have the novel rejected by publishers because "it was deficient in 'startling incident' and 'thrilling excitement'"; she was told "that it would never suit the circulating libraries, and it was on those libraries the success of works of fiction

mainly depended" (90). Interestingly, Brontë describes the process of writing her first novel as one of repressing her creativity; she writes, "I restrained imagination, eschewed romance, repressed excitement; *over-bright coloring too I avoided*, and sought to produce something which should be soft, grave, and true" (90, emphasis added). This discussion sets up a dichotomy of "romance" and "imagination" against that which is "grave" but "true." Here, "over-bright coloring" is represented as dishonest, and yet not entirely unlikeable; Brontë seems to suggest that color could have provided the interest that the publishers and readers desired in the novel. Brontë ends her letter to Lewes with a plea for creativity: "Imagination is a strong, restless faculty which claims to be heard and exercised. . . . When she shews us bright pictures are we never to look at them and reproduce them?" (91). For Brontë, it is imagination that provides the bright pictures, and she understands these pictures to be in vivid color. As her narrator, Lucy Snowe, states in *Villette*, only "Fancy" can provide a scene with "the deepest life and highest colour of passion" (584). Brontë's struggles to combine romantic elements with realist tenets in *Jane Eyre* illustrates that color, and its language, frames one of the largest literary and artistic debates of the nineteenth century as a battle between the desirable opposites of color and truth.

In both adhering to and resisting the limiting scope of realism, Brontë creates a dual literary personality: critics still speak of her as the "romantic genius" who "saw" her fictional worlds in her mind's eye and as the Brontë who helped herald the new, specifically Victorian, movement of literary realism and the social problem novel. Perhaps, however, it would be better to view Brontë instead as an author who is

grappling with the divide between chromophobia and chromophilia, trying to embrace romantic color while eschewing its alliance with cosmetics and the lie. In this battle between color and truth, Brontë strikes an uncomfortable compromise: she includes color in her narrative, but portrays it negatively for the sake of her protagonist. Because of Jane's vulnerable social position as an educated woman without fortune or family, her relationship with color must be carefully controlled to correspond with the moral and artistic meanings of color circulating outside of the narrative. But if Jane must be prepared to renounce the temptation of color, her creator Brontë cannot fully resign her novel to a world without color. As a result, Brontë turns to the province of the upper-class woman to provide that interest for the reader, introducing wealthy characters in order to depict an aesthetically beautiful world of fashionable clothes and brilliantly decorated houses, never forgetting, all the while, to include alongside her parading descriptions a negative commentary on the luxury and sensuality that this color evokes.

Material

Color in *Jane Eyre* is a semiotic system that works on several levels throughout the text. Not only it is used to differentiate Jane's character from those of the women that she paints, it is also deployed to assign moral and aesthetic values to the material possessions of the novel's characters. Analyzing the function of color requires paying attention to the things of the novel, which serve as the carriers of color. Outside of Jane's artwork, color appears most often in the decorative and dyed textiles of clothing and living spaces of *Jane Eyre*. Colorful decorations and ornamentation marks the

power distribution of English society in the novel, because in the decades before the flood of cheap dyestuffs of the 1860s, only the upper classes could afford to live in a world decorated with color. In *Jane Eyre*, the middle-class governess retaliates by turning the wealth and power that color symbolizes into a moral accusation of luxury and excess. Jane uses the very color she is denied to undercut the power of the upper classes, focusing her attack on the representatives of womankind, who have been historically associated with color, decoration, and surface.

As feminine decoration, color is above all a commodity. That is why color is so closely associated with the rare materials that carry its hue, but also its monetary value. The motif of precious jewels and jewelry in the novel appears in the descriptions of Jane's sublime Oriental paintings, the fashionable clothing of the ladies at the Thornfield house party, and in the jewels with which Rochester offers to decorate Jane on the morning of their engagement. It also appears in unlikely places, such as when Jane narrates a picturesque view near Moor House, transforming the natural splendor into material goods: the grass is described as "emerald" green (341), the sun is "golden," the sky "sapphire" (341). Purple dresses are called "amethyst" (228), while red glasswork is "ruby" (89). Similarly, Blanche Ingram wears "amber-coloured" accessories (135). Other colors are commodified by the naming of the expensive dyes and paints used to create them. Blues are often "azure" (146, 315); reds are alternatively "carmine" (315), "scarlet" (5, 23), or, most often, "crimson" (10, 32, 89, 145, 146, 156, 334). Dyed materials become important carriers of color symbolism in the text, as it is through women's fashion and interior décor that color is integrated into the text, then

subsequently disavowed as the exhibition of wealth. Though as these parading descriptions attest, the many mentions of color also betray the narrator's own "fascination with gaudy luxury" (Garson 256), as well as more than a few traces of chromophilia.

As well as through jewelry and expensive paints and dyes, color is often displayed at the level of dress. Clothing is vital to the characterization system of *Jane Eyre*, inscribing the internal values of characters in on the external surface of the body. Not only does Jane view "clothing almost allegorically, as emblematic of a woman's moral nature" (Garson 253), she expects her reader to do the same. This system relies on the historical meanings of clothing in the Christian tradition as "an index of character" which was "supposed to reflect a person's quality of mind" (Wheeler 17). Clothing had functioned as social classification since the creation of the sumptuary laws in the medieval period, laws that in England lasted well into the seventeenth century (17). The goal of these laws was to make "social status readable through clothing," literally creating a "form of segregation by dress, a system in which all members of society had to wear garments proper to their sex, estate, dignity, and rank" (Pastoureau, *Blue* 87). Pastoureau emphasizes that these practices relied on distinctions of color as well as material and style, creating "permitted and forbidden colors" for different social groups (*Blue* 88). Eventually, this practice translated to the association of morality with different hues, though he stresses that the "moral issue . . . was not the actual color, but the [expense of] the product used to create it" (90). Even after the termination of the sumptuary laws, the need for reliable cultural markers like clothing became even more

important as the British Empire expanded, bringing more and more disparate peoples into contact, and clothing was "key to the constitution of religious, class, national, and personal identity" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Wheeler 17). When Jane "reads" the clothing of various personages as signs of morality and taste for her reader,[21] she is making use of a color-coded clothing system that had been in place in the West for hundreds of years. Her focus on the clothing of the women, which leaves that of the men relatively unmarked, reflects a more recent trend: the "growing divide between the costume of the sexes" in the Victorian era, in which "men's dress becomes sober, plain, and very 'masculine'" (Ribeiro 199), and upper- and middle-class men eschew colorful fabrics (even for the waistcoat) in favor of a monochrome "uniform" of the "dark three-piece suit" (125). Because men's dress in the time does not allow for much differentiation between classes, Jane can only read the clothing of the wealthy women that she encounters throughout the novel.

Jane does not, however, innocently read the other female characters with detachment and objectivity; instead, she employs the textual signs of color and clothing to demonize her rivals along class lines and distinguish her own moral and social worth as a character. By narrating her own story, Jane is able to control the representation of the other characters and categorize them according to their relation to her own priorities and experiences. Glen points out this element of wish-fulfillment in Jane's narrative, stating, "The story that unfolds from Jane's perspective is one in which her view of the world is unequivocally confirmed, and she assumes a position of unassailable power" (57). As such, "By the end, she is paramount: those [characters] who have sought to

wrong her are punished" while those who have aided Jane "prosper" (58). In Jane's narration, the characters are tagged with descriptive terms that label them as "good" or "bad," or the equivalent of with Jane or against Jane. In order to claim the necessary originality and morality that makes her an attractive heroine, Jane must illustrate the important distinctions of her position and personality against these immoral characters. To accomplish this, Jane creates a semiotic system of polarized characters; these "moralized doubles," as Marjorie Garson refers to them (261), recur throughout the text to illustrate a contrast between the heroine, a poor, plain, and modest woman, and her female superiors, who are depicted as extravagant and colorful. As carriers of symbolic meaning rather than fully fleshed-out characters, these women appear largely interchangeable, serving only to allow Jane to differentiate herself as the hero of her own story. The presence of colorful clothing is one of the descriptive sign systems of the novel that Jane uses to control our readings of these female characters; in describing their fashions, Jane creates a color hierarchy that assigns moral values to each hue and each person who wears it.

In each major section of the text, as Jane travels across England, she finds a new set of colorful upper-class women with which to contrast herself; at Gateshead, these colorful females are the young Reed sisters, Eliza and Georgiana. Georgiana, in particular, is often associated with color; Jane notes "her pink cheeks and golden curls . . . seemed to give delight to all who looked at her" (12). Indeed, Abbot, the servant, confirms this: "Yes, I doat on Miss Georgiana . . . such a sweet colour as she has; just as if she were painted!" (21). In addition to Georgiana's colorful complexion, the text

emphasizes the elaborate and colorful toilettes of the two sisters. Jane watches as the servants lavishly prepare the girls to receive company, dressing them in "thin muslin frocks and scarlet sashes, with hair elaborately ringletted" (23). In this section, each compliment or colorful luxury bestowed on the Reed sisters serves to emphasize Jane's deprivation within the household and win the reader's sympathy. It is only after the adult Jane's moral superiority to nearly every character has been established by the text that Jane can be avenged against the Reed sisters. When Jane next returns to Gateshead, John Reed will have committed suicide, Mrs. Reed will be on her deathbed, and the colorful Misses Reed will be obliged to wear only their black mourning dress.

While at Lowood Institution, Jane is also denied access to color, because Mr. Brocklehurst, the head of the school, desires his students to look "quiet and plain" in drab colors in order to prevent vanity (28). The girls are dressed uniformly in "brown stuff frocks of quaint fashion, and long holland pinafores" (36); they also each have a "cloak of grey frieze" (40). The clergyman Brocklehurst even takes offense at colorful hair; he orders little Julia Severn's curly, red hair to be cut off not only because it represents sensuality, as critics have argued,[22] but also because of the cultural and religious meanings of color as seductive and dangerous. Because Jane cannot differentiate herself from these girls, who inhabit the same social station and dull uniform as she does, new characters must be introduced to the scene for the novel's color system to continue to work. The first of these is the noble Miss Temple, the head teacher, who acts a mediator between the children and Brocklehurst. To the young Jane, she appears to be very grand and fashionable. Her hair is arranged "according to the

fashion of those times," and "her dress, also in the mode of the day, was of purple cloth, relieved by a sort of Spanish trimming of black velvet" (40). Though she is kindly, the fashion and color of Miss Temple's dress places her far above the ranks of the other teachers and students, who view her with a sort of awe. As Helen Burns states, "Miss Temple is very good, and very clever: she is above the rest [of the teachers], because she knows far more than they do" (43). Because Miss Temple serves a model for the young Jane, she cannot function as a foil for Jane like the young Reed sisters. Therefore, Brontë introduces into the text the young Misses Brocklehursts, whose colorful upper class extravagance is contrasted to Jane's plain morality.

This is accomplished when Mr. Brocklehurst comes to visit the school and brings his wife and daughters. Although Brocklehurst lectures the students on the necessity of modest dress, the women of his family are "splendidly attired in velvet, silk, and furs" (54). Jane comments on their "costly" material trappings of beaver hats, ostrich plumes, and ermine trimmings (55), while one of Brocklehurst's daughters comments that the Lowood students "looked at my dress and mamma's, as if they had never seen a silk gown before" (28). The discrepancy of quality and aesthetics between the wardrobes of the Brocklehurst women and the Lowood girls is emphasized, but it is only when Jane is singled out for punishment that she references the colorful nature of the Brocklehursts' attire. In retribution for the lies described by Mrs. Reed, Mr. Brocklehurst sentences Jane to stand on a stool in the middle of the room. Jane reports that as she is "hoisted" up to the stool, she "was only aware . . . [of] a spread of shot orange and purple silk pelisses, and a cloud of silvery plumage [that] extended and waved below me" (55-56).

It is at the very moment that Jane is penalized that she lashes out against the Brocklehursts in her narrative, using color as her weapon. She employs twin tactics that follow common gender expectations to depict Mr. Brocklehurst as a cold, ascetic, black statue and the female Brocklehursts as sensual, spoiled, and colorful dolls. Although the Brocklehurst girls' purple clothing signals their inaccessibility and higher station in a similar manner to Miss Temple's purple, Jane's portrayal of them is quite different. Miss Temple is fashionable but tasteful; the strong color of her purple is "relieved" by the muting effect of the black trimming (40).[23] In contrast, the Brocklehursts' choice of material is a "shot orange and purple silk," in which orange and purple thread is woven together to create an iridescent fabric. The garish, shimmering combination of orange and purple set off with "silvery plumage" contrasts with Miss Temple's subdued black trim to illustrate the gaudy showy quality of the richer ladies (56). Similarly, unlike the "refined" Miss Temple (40), the Brocklehurst women are never individualized in the text and are represented metonymically by their colorful clothing. In this exchange, as in the previous instance of the Reed sisters, the extravagant colors of the "great people," as Jane sees them, function to contrast against the protagonist and her role model's modest middle-class individuality (57).

When Jane reaches Thornfield as a grown woman, she continues to arrange the narrative circumstances in order to contrast herself against rival genteel women. Denied color as a child, Jane has internalized her moral lessons and now chooses to reject colorful clothing and vilify those who wear color to express her own individuality. When Rochester returns to Thornfield with a party of his landowning and aristocratic

friends, Jane seizes the opportunity to associate the women with morally dubious colors. While Jane depicts the gentlemen, who "are all costumed in black," quickly and collectively (148), she spends two pages on portraying the looks, behavior, and wardrobes of the visiting ladies. Jane describes each as they enter the drawing room after dinner, and perhaps to cover her own jealousy and class alienation, claims to be unimpressed with their colorful and expensive garments. Jane disapproves of Lady Lynn's personality and attire (treated here as the same thing) and deems her "very haughty-looking," dressed as she is "in a satin robe of changeful sheen," an "azure plume," and a "circlet of a band of gems" (146). The only guest of whom Jane seems to approve is Mrs. Colonel Dent, whose monochrome dress Jane contrasts to the richer Lady Lynn's extravagance. She states, "Mrs. Colonel Dent was less showy; but, I thought, more lady-like. . . . Her black satin dress, her scarf of rich foreign lace, and her pearl ornaments, pleased me better than the rainbow radiance of the titled dame" (146). Jane, of course, is dressed similarly to Mrs. Colonel Dent, in a "silver-grey" dress and a "pearl brooch" (145). In complimenting Mrs. Dent, Jane promotes the fashion and economic values to which she herself subscribes.

After the lesson in taste illustrated in the contrast between Lady Lynn and Mrs. Colonel Dent's choices, Jane turns her attention to the showy and colorful dress of Lady Ingram and her daughters Blanche and Mary. Blanche and mother share an Orientalized wardrobe that favors the rich and expensive colors of red and purple. Blanche arrives at Thornfield in her "purple riding-habit," and she is later "attired in Oriental fashion: a crimson scarf tied sash-like around the waist" (141, 156). Jane portrays Lady Ingram's

outfit thus: “A crimson velvet robe, and a shawl turban of some gold-wrought Indian fabric, invested her (I suppose she thought) with a truly imperial dignity” (146). Through their costly color choices, the Ingrams are successfully associated with Eastern luxury as well as linked to the cruel Reed family; the Reed girls wore “scarlet sashes” just as Blanche wears a crimson sash and her mother a crimson robe (23). The red motif compares the humiliation Jane suffers on account of the Reeds’ prejudice to the Ingrams’ public derision of their governesses. Brontë reinforces this connection by directly comparing Mrs. Reed and Lady Ingram: “She [Lady Ingram] had, likewise, a fierce and hard eye: it reminded me of Mrs. Reed’s” (146). In the sign system of the novel, the rich Ingrams and Reeds appear interchangeable in their textual work of serving as an ornate and cruel contrast to Jane’s plain, goodhearted modesty.

The later portions of the text follow the same pattern, affirming those who mirror Jane’s preference for modest dress and condemning those who do not. Because Jane aspires to be like (and liked by) the Rivers sisters, they are described as attired in black (they are in mourning for their father) and have plain toilettes and hairstyles like Jane. In order for the color system to function in this section of the narrative, the colorful Rosamond is introduced to oppose and reinforce the identity of Jane. Rosamond first appears, like Blanche, in a “purple riding habit” and is alternately dressed in a “dark-blue silk dress” (314, 313). Also reminiscent of Blanche, Rosamond desires the man (St. John Rivers) who has set his sights on Jane. The lack in moral values that Jane attributes to colorful attire is useful in dismissing Rosamond’s romantic claims (necessary despite the protagonist’s relatively small interest in St. John compared with Rochester). The

character of Rosamond seems to appear briefly to fill Blanche's empty place, furthering the narrative by revealing the temperament of St. John and advancing that of Jane.

Only at one point in the narrative does the clearly established color system begin to falter; this occurs when Jane is in the most danger of losing her identity and moral status. On the morning after Jane has innocently entered into a sham engagement with Rochester, who is already married to Bertha, color does the work of signaling Jane's weakness in the face of temptation and the negative consequences of accepting Rochester's many offers. In these scenes, Jane is associated with several color markers that operate on different registers: she awakes with a more colorful complexion, dresses in a (still somewhat subdued) lilac dress, and goes shopping with Rochester to purchase a more colorful wardrobe. First, the delighted Jane finds herself transformed physically, so that she resembles the ideal feminine beauty of the typical marriage plot; she reports, "I looked at my face in the glass, and felt it was no longer plain: there was hope in its aspect, and life in its colour" (219). Rochester agrees, pronouncing her "blooming, and smiling," and "truly pretty this morning" with "rosy lips," "satin-smooth hazel hair" and "radiant hazel eyes," (220). This new association with colorful beauty extends to her dress as well, as Jane reports that she "took a plain but clean and light summer dress from my drawer and put it on: it seemed no attire had ever so well become me; because none had I ever worn in so blissful a mood" (219). The dress, later described to be one of lilac gingham (229), seems to have materialized just to fit Jane's new hopeful mood and position, as Jane has previously reported that she only has three dresses: one of "black stuff," "one of black silk," and "one of light grey" that is reserved for formal

occasions (102). Although gingham is not a costly fabric, it appears here in order to illustrate the first step of Jane's fashionable corruption. The muted lilac and white pattern of the cotton dress sets the stage for the deep purple silk gown that Rochester will offer Jane only hours later at the silk warehouse. This scene illustrates that once Jane begins to be associated with the color and beauty of traditional upper-class femininity, she becomes subject to the dangers of seduction just like the novel's wealthy women.

Jane quickly becomes uncomfortable with the extravagant color and gifts that Rochester attempts to lavish on her. When Rochester eagerly proclaims her "Jane Rochester" and offers to cover her in jewels, telling her that he has already sent a letter to his banker for the jewelry, Jane uncomfortably cries, "No, no, sir! . . . Don't address me as if I were a beauty; I am your plain, Quakerish governess" (220). Rochester ignores Jane's protests and makes plans to take her to nearby Millcote to buy her new dresses befitting her new station. In Millcote's silk warehouse, a new battle begins, as Rochester "orders" Jane to pick out "half a dozen dresses" (228). Jane objects to the extravagance and talks him down to two new dresses, Rochester settling on "a rich silk of the most brilliant amethyst dye, and a superb pink satin" (228). Jane responds "that he might as well buy me a gold gown and a silver bonnet at once: I should certainly never venture to wear his choice" (229). Jane does not object to his offer of fine materials, but rather to the color of the material, which she likens in expense to gold and silver. She states that, "With infinite difficulty, for he was stubborn as a stone, I persuaded him to make an exchange in favour of a sober black satin and pearl-grey silk"

(229). She still chooses expensive satin and silk, but enacts her rejection of his monetary control in the rejection of the colors he selects for her. Because color functions as the text's symbol of upper-class femininity, Jane favors the monochrome hues that match her "usual colorless, grey attire" and represent her modesty and independence as a governess (Hennelly 110).

After all, the "brilliant amethyst" and "superb pink" are colors that have already been associated with conventional, and flawed, femininity in the novel. Pink is the color of the dress that Rochester has given his dependent Adèle. This dress, "a little pink silk frock," gives Adèle great satisfaction, but both Rochester and Jane associate her pleasure with her French vanity and selfish superficiality (119).[24] Rochester calls her a "genuine daughter of Paris" as he gives her the dress (110), while Jane, on noticing Adèle's "rapture," thinks that "coquetry runs in her blood, blends with her brains, and seasons the marrow of her bones" (119). The color amethyst not only recalls the rich jewels that Jane has already rejected from Rochester, but is also a shade of the problematic purple worn by Jane's superiors in the novel, particularly her romantic rivals, who are associated with sexuality and luxury. The vain and conniving Blanche Ingram wears a "purple riding-habit" as she sweeps up the drive of Thornfield Manor, riding next to Mr. Rochester (141). Later on, the "coquettish" Rosamond Oliver will also wear a "purple habit" as she comes to call on the village school and flirt with St. John Rivers (313), while the villain Bertha will actually embody the color purple through her skin color. The connotations of this color choice for Blanche and Rosamond's outfits should not be overlooked, as research shows that a riding habit in such a color would have been

unlikely and in poor taste in the early Victorian period. Alison Matthews David illustrates that by mid-century, the jeweled-toned habits of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century had been replaced with ones of muted hues, in which "the only appropriate colors for a lady's riding habit were black, navy, gray, and brown" (182).[25] David explains that "Etiquette manuals repeatedly emphasiz[ed] the mistake of wearing colorful clothing for riding, often with moralizing anecdotes," because women riders were already at risk of being considered fast or sexually aggressive, and color, presumably, increased that risk (180-2). Purple, in particular, was understood to be a color with a sexualized history. Furthermore, like a riding habit, which was representative of the leisure pursuits of the upper classes, the color purple also possessed economic implications, as purple dye was very rare and therefore expensive. The purple clothing of Blanche and Rosamond functions on several levels to attack their feminine modesty and economic position, a fact illustrated by a brief history of the color purple.

Before the invention of industrial purple by the British Sir William Perkin in 1856 (Garfield 8), it was historically very difficult to produce purple dye.[26] It was possible to make a weak purple by distilling berries or flowers, but the strongest and most enduring purple color came from mollusks, the traditional source of the priceless Tyrian purple. Tyrian purple is the hue that Jane chooses when describing the dining room curtains at Thornfield (Brontë 88), a reference meant to illustrate the power and wealth of the Rochester family through the presence of this exclusive and rare dye. Traditionally, the dye was produced by the Phoenicians, particularly those in the port city of Tyre (in modern day Lebanon), who were so famous for producing the most

celebrated purple in history that their "very name derives from the Greek word for purple, phoinis" (Finlay 357). This precious purple was so desirable and expensive that its use was often restricted solely to the clothing of the highest ranking royalty and politicians in antiquity; the Roman emperors even threatened the "penalty of death" for usurpers of purple (Gage, *Culture* 25-26). Before purple could be democratized, its production (always a closely guarded secret) was diminished with the collapse of the Roman Empire, and then lost entirely with the storming of Constantinople in 1453 (Finlay 354). In the sixteenth century, Italian historian Guido Panciroli noted: "Of all those Things, which have now no Being or Existence in Nature, that which is most worthy of our Notice, in the first Place to be observ'd, is *Purple*; which is counted the chief, and is reckon'd (as it were) the *King* of all Colours" (1, emphasis original). This ignorance continued throughout the nineteenth century; as Victoria Finlay explains, "Tyrian purple, educated Victorians knew, was made from shellfish found in the eastern Mediterranean. But which ones, and how they were processed, was not known" (354).[27]

The mystery of the production of purple resulted in many historical myths and prejudices, with purple coming to represent greed, luxury, coquetry, and seduction. Panciroli records the mythical story of purple's origin, discovered in a shellfish (also called the purple) by the hero Hercules. His story, translated into English in 1727, relates that "The invention of purple is ascribed to Hercules, who walking along the shore with a damsel he lov'd, by chance his Boy had seiz'd on one [a purple] thrown up by the Sea, and smear'd his Lips with the Tincture; which she admiring, refus'd to be his until he had brought her a Garment of that Colour, who not long after accomplish'd it"

(3-4). In some versions of the tale, this woman is Helen of Troy; in others, it is Hercules's dog that finds the murex shell and crushes it with his teeth, dying his mouth purple (Finlay 371). The latter is the case in the painting *The Discovery of Purple* by Peter Paul Rubens, who was himself "a partisan of color" (Nochlin, "Picasso's Colors" 106). Panciroli's account presents the sinister side of the color by emphasizing the queer boy who paints his mouth suggestively, the young coquette who jealously wants the cosmetic for herself, and the Herculean effort needed to please and ornament a vain woman.

Other Western myths also connect purple with feminine seduction, particularly by a woman of power. For instance, history tells that it was Cleopatra who introduced the Eastern luxury of purple to Rome through her seduction of Julius Caesar. Cleopatra's purple decorations were symbolic of her wealth, as descriptions of her barge's purple sails and her palace's purple walls attest.[28] But it was also symbolic of her seduction of the married Caesar, whom she introduced to Tyrian purple. When Caesar returned to Rome, he left an illegitimate son behind but brought with him a "totally purple, sea-snail-dyed, full-length toga" (Finlay 363-4). Caesar, in turn, used his new purple not only to ornament his dress, but also to express his power; in Rome, Caesar declaimed that "the colour could be worn only by the emperor and his household" (Garfield 39). In the story of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra, purple combines to represent wealth, seduction, power, and even tyranny. Purple is treated similarly in biblical stories; for instance, the whore of Babylon is "clothed in purple and scarlet" in the Book of Revelation (17.4). Her dress is associated with her excessive sexuality as

the "Mother of Prostitutes" who, like Cleopatra, "committed fornication" with "the kings of the Earth" (Rev. 18.3). But her colors are also as well as the luxury of wealth, as the purple and scarlet dress is also described as "adorned with gold and jewels and pearls" (Rev. 17.4). Clearly the connotations of power, wealth, and female seduction have historically been floating around in the cultural meanings of purple, tied to Helen of Troy, Cleopatra, and the Whore of Babylon well before Charlotte Brontë used the color to besmirch the reputations of Jane's rivals Rosamond and Blanche.

The use of purple in the representation of Blanche and Rosamond's dress illustrates that the two women embody the dangers of the flesh for Rochester and St. John.[29] The beautiful but intellectually and spiritually average Rosamond is the less dangerous and corrupt of the two, but her unfettered sensuality nonetheless represents a fall for the religious and ambitious St. John. Rosamond possesses the beauty that the heroine does not, requiring that the narrative undercut her attractions through the illustration of her colorful beauty as a useless luxury and a dangerous aid to seduction. Blanche is the greater danger in the text, desirous as she is of the novel's hero, but she is also easier to read in her greedy motivation. With her "meretricious arts and calculated manoeuvers" (159), Blanche's agenda is made very clear to both character and reader. Even Rochester is aware of her mercenary attempts at husband hunting, remaining unaffected and instead using her for his own game of making Jane jealous. The dressing of these two ladies in purple suggests to the reader their capacity for seduction, as well as the moral dangers of feminine luxury and extravagance.[30]

According to the logic of the novel, it appears that if Jane is to be respected in her marriage to Rochester, she must reject any similarities with the coquettes of the novel, including the colors with which their feminine wiles are associated. Therefore, Jane must reject Rochester's offer of clothing in pink and amethyst, lighter shades of the maligned scarlet and purple of luxury, and claim for herself a Quaker colorlessness through her "sober black satin and pearl-grey silk" (229). Having already condemned the fine ladies of Rochester's house party for their love of frivolity and color in her narrative, and having used this condemnation to differentiate herself from these morally suspect ladies, Jane must reject Rochester's gift of color. Jane may wish to, in the words of Batchelor, "fall into color" (39), to be part of the glittering world of house parties and well-dressed ladies that she has described so lyrically and from which she has been excluded earlier in the novel. However, if she should succumb to that colorful world of privilege, her structural system would collapse and there would be nothing particularly moral or special about Jane—she would lose the narrative credibility so carefully established through her color-coded clothing system.

It is only at Ferndean, at the conclusion of the novel, that Jane drops the polarizing color system that has served her so well throughout the text and only because it has fulfilled its purpose. At Ferndean, there are no further rivals for affection, love, and financial security; indeed, there is no other woman with whom to compete (Jane's narrative does not take notice of the servant Mary). Furthermore, there are no longer class distinctions to be made, as Jane has both inherited her own fortune and is set to marry her landed lover Rochester. Rochester has learned his lesson through his own

suffering and has come around to Jane's negative view of luxurious color, which he can no longer see in his blindness; he comments to Jane, "Never mind fine clothes and jewels now: all that is not worth a fillip" (380). It is only after she is securely married and Rochester's eyesight has been destroyed that Jane can venture as far as to wear her second, if moderate, color: a dress of "pale blue" (384). Because it is pale, this shade of blue avoids the censure given to bright dyes and luxury fabrics. Furthermore, light blue has not been previously integrated into the symbolic economy of the novel as have the deeper blues of azure and sapphire, and is therefore acceptable for the now independent Jane. Once she marries into the landed classes, Jane no longer needs to differentiate her moral and aesthetic choices from those of her superiors; yet, Jane's color sign system cannot be entirely discarded, even after the heroine wins all that she desired.

If color marks the material goods that Jane cannot possess as a governess, it also marks the spaces that she cannot access. Space is, of course, central to Brontë's novel, a fact on which many critics have commentated; for instance, Karen Chase declares that "few novels are as spatially articulate as *Jane Eyre,*" explaining that even "individual rooms come to have distinct personalities" in the novel (59). It is important to note that these domestic spaces are often characterized by their symbolic color motifs, which Brontë uses to connect spaces across the many locations of the novel. For example, the text's two most well-known domestic spaces are tied together in sequence and color scheme: Jane's location in the sanctuary of the window seat behind the red curtain quickly shifts to Jane's imprisonment within the red walls of the red-room. However, space also does the textual work of expanding on the characterization of the people of

the novel, with the decoration of interior spaces indicating the owner's social status, aesthetic taste, and moral values. The inclusion of color in these spaces largely consists of splashes of colorful textiles, usually upholstery and drapes, against pale or neutral backgrounds. As Freedgood remarks, *Jane Eyre* is "a novel that is flush with the details of furniture and drapery" (31). These lovingly detailed spaces are marked by red and purple, two historically expensive hues that have been promoted to textual signs by *Jane Eyre*'s semiotic system of color. For example, Thornfield's two main social spaces, the drawing room and dining room, are red and purple respectively. The drawing room has a "snow and fire" color scheme, with white carpets and marble accented by crimson furnishings and draperies (Brontë 89). The dining room, connected to the drawing room by a curtained arch, is dominated by "purple chairs and curtains," a "Turkey carpet," and "vases of fine purple spar" (88). The color of the separating curtain alternates with the scene and position of the viewer: "crimson" in the drawing room (145), while twice described as "purple" or "Tyrian-dyed" in the dining room (111, 88). It is hard to tell whether this arch is hung with two curtains to match each room's decor, or if the single reference to the crimson curtain is simply an inconsistency within the text. Whatever the case, the colors of red and purple are very closely aligned in the text, as is their symbolism, used to connote privilege, luxury, and excess in the domestic spaces of the novel.

From an artistic viewpoint, red and purple are near neighbors on the color wheel and have been historically seen as "link[ed]" both in hue and symbolism (Gage 73).[31] Together, red and purple have been associated with power and money in the west since

antiquity, due to the rarity and expense of the dyes necessary to achieve pure tones. In fact, red and purple would not have been such different colors before the creation of aniline dyes in the late 1850s. Tyrian purple is thought to have been closely related to red, and after its loss, purple cloth would have been made from red dye combined with a mordant (a chemical fixer) to create a violet tone that was very close to red (Pastoureau, *Blue* 74).[32] Of the two, red coloring, although still costly, was easier to come by and would therefore have played a larger role in everyday life. Crimson red, often mentioned in the novel, was historically seen as "the color of power and wealth" because it was expensive to produce large amounts of the color (Pastoureau, *Blue* 85). Its name derives from the tiny kermes, a Mediterranean insect, which would be dried and crushed to create a red powder. Because it was such an important signifier of wealth and social status, sumptuary laws prevented all but lords and dignitaries from "owning luxurious red fabrics" in parts of Italy and Germany in the fourteenth century (90, 96). But because of its association with wealth, red has also been considered slightly "diabolical" (82), and for Protestants, has been associated with "the worst forms of luxury and sin" in the papist church (101). *Jane Eyre* taps into all these latent social meanings when it assigns to red the symbolic work of defining upper class domestic space.

From the very first page of the novel, the color red marks the boundaries between Jane's space and that of her wealthier relatives. *Jane Eyre* opens on a scene of the young, "physical[ly] inferior Jane" ensconced womblike, with her book, behind the "red moreen curtain" of the window seat at Gateshead (5). The narrator is briefly happy in this little hideaway, stating that "Folds of scarlet drapery shut in my view to the right

hand; to the left were the clear panes of glass, protecting, but not separating me from the drear November day" (5-6). Although the scarlet draperies offer protection from the visual surveillance of her cousins the Reeds, they also imprison her in a small, cold space on the margins between the outside and inside. This is the first appearance of many liminal spaces in a text that critic Mark M. Hennelly, Jr. describes as striking in the "sheer number of its thresholds and margins" (103). In this scene, the color red is also established as symbolic of fear and violence, as Eliza Reed easily perceives Jane's hiding place, forcing Jane to emerge "trembl[ing]" rather than "being dragged forth" by her older cousin John (Brontë 7). In the exchange that follows, John throws a book at Jane's head, spilling her red blood, then flies at her when the incensed Jane retorts that he is "like a murderer" and a "slave-driver" (8). Jane's punishment for this outcry reinforces red as a symbol of fear and the abuse of power, as she is locked in the deserted (and supposedly haunted) "red-room" by her guardian Mrs. Reed (9).

The red room is another liminal space, located inside the house, but "remote from the nursery and kitchens" and other common spaces (11). Just as the window seat behind the red curtain is a indeterminate space between the reality of the Reed household and the "alternate spaces" of Jane's "imaginative world of literature" (Leggatt and Parkes 179), the red room is presented as a space between the world of the living and "another world" because it was the site of her uncle's death (Brontë 14). Jane imagines that she feels his haunting presence as "the secret of the red-room" (11). Red objects, the material signs of her deceased uncle's wealth, surround Jane in the stately room. It contains a reddish-brown mahogany bed hung with "curtains of deep red damask," a

table “covered with a crimson cloth,” and rich “red” carpet (10). Jane is overwhelmed by chromatic power of the room’s red color scheme, feeling as if her “brain was in tumult” and her nerves still “shaken” by the previous violent encounter (12, 13). Haunted by strange visions and imagining that she feels her uncle’s presence, Jane interprets a passing light outside as “a herald of some coming vision from another world” (14). Her panic, described strongly as “oppress[ion]” and “suffocat[ion]” (14), drives her to try frantically to escape, only to be repulsed again by Mrs. Reed until Jane shows “perfect submission and stillness” (14). Mercifully for Jane’s psyche, the scene ends here, with Jane lapsing into unconsciousness.

The terror of the episode reaches far beyond the walls of the red room. This formative episode in Jane’s character, only occupying a few hours, leaves an impression on Jane’s mental and physical health: narrator Jane reports that it “gave my nerves a shock, of which I feel the reverberation to this day” and caused “some fearful pangs of mental suffering” in her life to come (16). The next chapter opens immediately with Jane reporting, “The next thing I remember is, waking up with a feeling as if I had a frightful nightmare, and seeing before me a terrible red glare, crossed with thick black bars” (14-15). As Jane revives, and her “cloud of bewilderment dissolve[s],” she recognizes “that the red glare was the nursery fire” (15). Yet the association of the red color with the “frightful nightmare” persists, and signal to the reader that Jane, although recovering physically, is still subject to the economic power and physical violence of the Re[e]d family. The black bars of her vision remind the reader that Jane’s lack of financial resources will keep her in this prison of fear and abuse. The red curtain, red

room, and red fire all symbolize the inequality of power both in Jane's childhood home at the Reeds' and in the larger world she will enter. Brontë takes care in the first three chapters, each with its red symbol, to establish the early traumas of emotional and physical abuse of a poor girl and to foreshadow her trials to come in the greater world from her disadvantaged position. If *Jane Eyre* is, as Gilbert and Gubar claim, "a story of enclosure and escape" (339), then enclosure is signified by the color red and represents that from which Jane must escape.

It should come as no surprise then that when the adult Jane arrives at Thornfield Hall, it is again a red curtain that divides her space from that of the landowning class of Rochester and his friends. When Rochester orders that Jane accompany Adèle in the drawing room when he has company, the two enter ahead of the rest of the party, who are still at dinner in the adjoining room. A "crimson curtain" hangs in the arch between the two rooms, marking the space of belonging of the happy party in the dining room from that of the governess and her charge waiting silently in the drawing room (145). Just as she had at Gateshead, Jane "retires to a window seat, and, taking a book from a table near, endeavoured to read" (145). Here, she reports, "the window curtain half hides me" from the eyes of her class superiors (148). The drawing room at Thornfield combines the space of Jane's window seat with that the red-room through its red decorations of draperies, "crimson couches and ottomans," and "sparkling Bohemian glass [of] ruby red" which form a "rich contrast" with the white carpets (89). It is the color red that both marks the boundaries and edges of these liminal spaces and signals Jane's return to her childhood emotional vulnerability at Thornfield.

When Jane finally frees herself of financial vulnerability near the end of the novel, this transition is marked, once again, in the color red. While at Moor House, Jane inherits a fortune from her uncle, John Eyre, a wine merchant in Madeira. She also gains a domestic circle when she learns that her Uncle John is also the Rivers siblings' Uncle John. Suddenly possessing both a family and monetary means, Jane finds herself firmly ensconced in the independent middle classes. She celebrates this happy transformation not by buying dresses and jewels, but by redecorating the domestic spaces of Moor House. Jane purchases new furniture, carpets and curtains, and decorative touches of "antique ornaments in porcelain and bronze" (333), improving the old house as a sign of her own financial independence. However, her early experiences with money and power frame her expression of her newfound wealth, and Jane chooses two rooms to be "refurnished entirely with old mahogany and crimson upholstery" (334). Freedgood notes that Jane turns these rooms "into replicas of the infamous red room at Gateshead, she fills them with the 'old mahogany' furniture and crimson drapery that contributed to her terror during her imprisonment in the room where her kindly uncle died" (32). Freedgood argues that "She thus creates for herself a souvenir of the sadism she endured at the hands of her cousins and her Aunt Reed at Gateshead; she makes it her own" as one of "the novel's winners" (32, 51). In redecorating Moor House's spare rooms in mahogany and crimson, Jane has come full circle, back to the original red prisons of the window seat, red-room, and nursery of her childhood.

This time, however, Jane is on the other side of the red curtain, and that makes all the difference; rather than a prison, Jane sees the redecorated Moor House as a "model

of bright modest snugness" that protects her from the "wintry waste and deserted dreariness" outside (Brontë 334). This image not only recalls, but revises the opening scene in the window seat, where the "red moreen curtain" had shut Jane out from the warm fireside of the Reed drawing room and the "clear panes of glass, protect[ed] but [did] not separate[e] [her] from the drear November day" (5). Here at Moor House, too, is the harsh English winter, but through the gift of her inheritance, Jane's position is reversed, and she is tucked away from the threat of bad weather in her new home filled with the red tones of "new drapery" and "cheerful firelight" (335). The textual meaning of red transforms as Jane does, and red becomes the color of comfort, because it is the color of economic independence and social belonging. Jane relishes the transition that gives her new power, and marks it in red, the color that once excluded her.

The red materials of furniture and draperies are such strong symbolic signs of arrival, wealth, and belonging to Brontë that they not only invade the interior spaces of *Jane Eyre*, but also Brontë's own domestic home of Haworth parsonage. Elizabeth Gaskell reports that after *Jane Eyre*'s publication, the Brontë family "parlour had been evidently refurnished within the last few years, since Miss Brontë's success has enabled her to have a little more money to spend. . . . The prevailing colour of the room is crimson, to make a warm setting for the cold grey landscape without" (384). Brontë, like her fictional counterpart Jane, cannot resist enacting her ascent to monetary comfort through red, the color of warmth and luxury. More than just an instance of art imitating life (or in this case, life imitating art), this correspondence between Moorhead and Haworth illustrates how deeply the association of red with wealth, power, and their

comforts was impressed upon Brontë's psyche. Once both author and protagonist achieve monetary success and social acceptance, the meaning of red, which had previously represented the social and physical violence of Gateshead and Thornfield, begins to shift. Although Jane limits her contact with color in clothing, she surrounds herself with the markers of economic security and comfort through colorful interior design that imitates that of the upper class spaces she was previously denied. Once Jane "wins" in the final chapters of the text, she reevaluates her novel's color system and embraces the red hues that had previously marked her social and economic repression.

Skin

Once Brontë and her narrator discover the cultural and textual work that color can accomplish, the text moves from associating people with color to coloring people, extending its color continuum from clothing to skin. Linguistically, it makes sense for the discursive uses of color and skin to come together both in the novel and in society at large. The words skin and color come from the same root word and both are related to the concept of the surface: "In Greek thought the idea of color (chroma) was itself related . . . to skin (chros), that is, to the surface rather than to the substance" (Gage, *Color and Meaning* 69). Since antiquity, color has continued to be associated with surface in the West: Roland Barthes once wrote, in a discussion of photography, that he could never shake the feeling that color was "a coating applied later on the original truth of the black-and-white photograph. For me, colour is an artifice, a cosmetic (like the kind used to paint corpses)" (81). In Barthes' view, like that of many before him, color

is dishonest because it obscures the truth. Like color, skin is also seen as merely surface; one notes the common expression that "beauty is only skin deep," or to put it another way, not deep at all.

Jane Eyre follows Western cultural norms when it conflates color, skin, and surface, then purports to be able to see through them. The novel, and its hero and heroine, subscribe heavily to the ideal of phrenology, a nineteenth-century science that promised to make the interior of a person legible on the exterior through the "reading" of head shapes and facial features.[33] Because the novel believes that it can read the surface of the head as one could a map, it is hardly surprising that these markers would migrate from the structure of the face to the skin covering it. By assigning skin and its color textual meaning, this strategy attempts to make the whole body legible. This promise of legibility is not only for Jane as a character, but also for the reader, who is directed in his or her interpretation by these skin color markers. As Sue Thomas points out, both Bertha and Richard Mason's "characters are read for readers of the novel largely through physical traits that encode them" (12-13). Although Thomas's argument is specifically concerned with the Mason siblings, I would contend that this is true of all the characters, who are made accessible for the reader through their physical traits, particularly their skin color.

From a technical viewpoint, this sign system effectively expresses characterization by using cultural, complexion-based shorthand, but it also creates a color system that moves beyond color association in art and dress to a very clearly divided racial taxonomy. Brontë's system also empowers her narrator Jane as the

creator of the hierarchy. As Richard Dyer explains, "the very process of hierarchisation is an exercise of power" (102). Jane does not shrink from this exercise; rather, she reorganizes her world according to the attributes necessary for her own self to move from the margins of society to the center, using "the power of the teller to shape the fictional world" in order to place herself on top of the hierarchy (Glen 57). This hierarchy of skin color, ranging from pale characters to those that are purple, enables Brontë's novel to order the world in its own way, according to the proto-feminist, middle-class values that the author and protagonist seek to promote.

In creating her skin-color hierarchy, Jane draws both on color's cultural history and science's racial taxonomies. Traditionally, color has always had the capacity to rank people; as Pastoureau points out, "in all cultures, color's primary function is to classify, mark, announce, connect, or divide" (*Blue* 10). Consequently, color's already extant signaling and divisive qualities lend themselves well to Brontë's needs in *Jane Eyre*. These qualities of color also overlap with the scientific classification project of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that focuses increasingly on surface and skin color. This "science of surfaces," as Roxann Wheeler terms it, derives from natural history methodology, which "reduc[ed] the complexity of similarities and differences to a description of visible features" in order to organize the world into clear taxonomies (Wheeler 29). Many of the human taxonomies relied on skin color as a determining factor after the Comte de Buffon's *Natural History* initially "declare[d] complexion to be one of the three most important features separating human groups" in the eighteenth century (29). Buffon created a new skin color spectrum that included not only black and

white, but also "several intermediate distinctions" of "copper, purple, tawny, olive, yellow, and brown" (30). Brontë draws on these color and racial discourses to create a complex system of skin color markers, which include Buffon's yellow and purple skin tones, then she assigns these markers ethical values that correspond to each character's perceived morality.

While many critics have noted the varying complexion markers of the novel, the characters' skin colors have yet to be situated within Brontë's large-scale color system of art, fashion, and décor. Critics have focused on Bertha's racial origins and the conflation of the wealthy British characters with imperial corruption and racial difference. Patricia McKee discusses the novel's usefully ambiguous racial strategies that allow Jane to "narrate her [own] whiteness as she consigns not only the Creole Bertha Rochester but the upper-class Blanche Ingram to the racial status of dark primitives" (67-68). Elsie Michie notes that "the semes of race difference, like those of Orientalism, are not fixed to one character but can always float from one to another" depending on the text's needs (135). Thomas writes of the interpretable nature of whiteness in nineteenth-century England, stating that "In the racial formation of the British empire whiteness was not a homogenous category. There were hierarchies within whiteness, as well as hierarchies which placed various non-white peoples in relation to white peoples and to each other on civilizational scales"; she claims that the "chart[ing] [of] racial variation of whiteness" in *Jane Eyre* represents this historical reality (12). While these discussions make an important start, these racial and moral taxonomies need to be situated within *Jane Eyre*'s larger color system, which labels morality through the social meanings of color.

Jane Eyre's skin color hierarchy conflates race and morality in order to mark the perceived moral virtue of each character with a specific skin color. Jane always allots pale or light-colored skin to the "good" characters (those who are friendly to Jane and her values), who are placed at the top of the hierarchy of characters. Those people who are morally ambiguous, especially those associated with the upper classes, are assigned a darker skin color to suggest their imperial corruption. The lower ranks include those who have been completely corrupted by wealth or excess and are designated by sickly yellow skin. Last, the color system culminates in the purple-colored skin that signals a complete bodily imbalance; this is the skin color possessed by the villain Bertha, who resides at the very bottom of the text's moral and racial hierarchy.

Those characters that adhere to Christian morality are placed at the top in a manner that fuses the religious association of white with innocence and purity with the pale English complexion. Naturally, Jane's "tactics place Jane at the top of the scale" (McKee 68), as she is always portrayed as "pale" or "white" in comments made by Mr. Rochester (Brontë 220). Many of Jane's friends are also labeled as pale-skinned, including Maria Temple and the Rivers siblings. In the paragraph that introduces Miss Temple, Jane's mentor and teacher, she is described to be "fair" and "pale," with the "whiteness" of her complexion offset by dark eyelashes and hair (39-40). The devout St. John Rivers is "fair" (376), just as his sisters Mary and Diana possess "very fair necks and faces" (283). Without exception, the whitest characters of the book are those from the middle classes who represent English Protestant morality.

The darker English characters are illustrated as tainted by wealth and its temptations, and are often associated with either the British Empire or continental Europe. These darker characters include Blanche Ingram and her mother Lady Ingram; Mrs. Reed and Eliza Reed; and Mr. Rochester. Blanche Ingram, despite her ironic first name, is said to be "dark as a Spaniard" (147), while her mother's face is "inflated and darkened," ruining her attempt at "imperial dignity" (146).[34] Jane likens Lady Ingram to Mrs. Reed in the text, as both not only possess a "fierce and a hard eye," but also "dark" skin (146, 29). Likewise, Eliza Reed is compared to Blanche Ingram: Eliza is "tall, almost as tall as Miss Ingram,—very thin too, with a sallow face and severe mein" (194). First, Lady Ingram's character is sullied through her comparison to the cruel Mrs. Reed of Jane's childhood; then, when Jane returns to Gateshead, the now fully grown Eliza is quickly linked with the morally degenerate aristocratic Ingrams in order to characterize her negatively in her first appearance as an adult. Like Blanche, who is "dark as a Spaniard" (147), the "sallow" Eliza is associated with European rather than English values; her aestheticism is linked to corrupt Continental Catholicism rather than good, healthy Protestant morality and is depicted as just another type of upper-class indulgence, this time the indulgence in religious fanaticism and popery. Whether at Gateshead and Thornfield, the wealthy characters Jane encounters, the Reeds or the Ingrams, are marked in a racialized manner to undermine the power of British class system in favor of the middle classes, who are shown to be truly English and truly white.

Similarly, the affluent Rochester often gives into the pleasures of luxury and sensuality, a practice that is illustrated to have originated in his time spent in the West

Indies and developed further as he traveled on the European continent. He is therefore Orientalized and is often described as having skin that is "dark" (96, 99), "olive" (149), or even "swarth[y]" (156).[35] As Jane's romantic interest, he is the only one of this category to be redeemed: Blanche and her family are dismissed from the text as soon as Rochester's intentions towards Jane are revealed, while Mrs. Reed dies still tormented by her son's transgressions and unable to feel Christian forgiveness and remorse. At the end of the narrative, when Jane reunites with Rochester at Ferndean, he has been humbled by injury and is repentant of his previous sins. Not only does Rochester accept the norms of Protestant morality, but also his connections to the foreign Masons' tainted colonial wealth are dissolved by Bertha's death and Thornfield's destruction. At Ferndean, all mentions of his dark skin, so prominent in the Thornfield section, disappear entirely from the text. When freed from sexual temptation, luxurious wealth, and foreign ties, Rochester implicitly moves back up the scale of whiteness to join Jane in a happy and English domesticity.

Even lower on the hierarchy are those characters that are described as sallow, meaning their complexions are "a sickly yellow or brownish yellow colour" ("Sallow," def. a). The spoiled John and Eliza Reed, along with Bertha's brother Richard Mason, are identified as sallow in order to illustrate their close association with excess and luxury. The young John is described in the narrative as "stout for his age, with a dingy and unwholesome skin" that derives from the family practice of indulgence that will later lead to Mrs. Reed's and Georgiana Reed's weight gain (7). Although Mrs. Reed attributes "John's sallowness" to over-application in his studies, his schoolmaster blames

it on too many "cakes and sweetmeats" (7). Narrator Jane, who considers John a "tyrant" and a "slave-driver" (8-9), confirms the schoolmaster's opinion by reporting to the reader that John "gorged himself habitually at table, which made him bilious, and gave him a dim and bleared eye and flabby cheeks" (7). John's early inability to control either his appetite or his temper foreshadows the more serious errors of his adulthood, when John spends profligately, plunges his family into debt, than eventually commits suicide. The use of yellow to signal John's propensity for overindulgence is tied to the early medical theory of the bodily humors, in which choleric people are seen to be bad-humored and easily angered, and are associated with an excess of yellow bile in the body. In the Galenic system, the humors, blood phlegm, bile and black bile, circulate through the body in the blood and must be kept in a careful balance. Because the humors "are the product of the body's digestion of food," excessive eating or overly rich food, like that in which John indulges from an early age, can result in illness and an excessively choleric complexion, one dominated by yellow bile (Selleck 150). In this case, the yellowness of John's skin directly signals the imbalance within his own body, which the text suggests occurs because of John's lack of bodily restraint and moral discipline.

While the choleric John illustrates the humoral body's connection to what it internalizes through ingestion, the other yellow character, Richard Mason, represents the humoral body's ability to be shaped by its external environment. In humoral theory, the body was seen as porous and therefore "Under continual influence from without" (151), resulting in the idea that a body must be in harmony with its environment. In the

eighteenth century, the legacy of Galenic medical theory was combined with imperial politics to portray the tropics as an unhealthy climate for European bodies. This lingering belief in the humors in the nineteenth century is illustrated in *Jane Eyre*, as the tropical environment of Mason's home in Jamaica is portrayed as having enervated his body to the point of illness, leaving him weak and yellow. Like John Reed, Mason is also associated with excess, this time the particularly Creole excess of the plantation society, which was seen by the British at home as suspiciously luxurious and morally depraved. When Mason arrives at Thornfield, the young ladies of the house party find "the yellow-skinned yet socially white Mr. Mason" an attractive man and regard him as a possible match (Meyer 252). Only the more discerning Jane is "unsettled" by his coloring and effeminate, Creole physiognomy (Brontë 162). Jane's labeling of Mason's complexion as "singularly sallow" not only aligns him with the intemperate habits of John Reed (162), it also warns of a specifically moral lapse in the foreign Mason's character. Jane's suspicious depiction of the yellow Richard Mason marks the progression of the narrative's skin color system, which increasingly combines humoral and racial discourses until it achieves the violent othering of his sister Bertha through her purple skin.

Purple skin in the text suggests an absolute imbalance in the body. Along with the sinful and dissolute Bertha Mason, the text also describes the "under-teacher" Miss Miller as briefly possessing a purple complexion. Miss Miller appears to the young Jane as "more ordinary [than Miss Temple]; ruddy in complexion, though a careworn countenance; hurried in gain and action, like one who had always a multiplicity of tasks

on hand" (36). Redder than the pale Miss Temple, the lower-ranked and less educated Miss Miller suffers under the stringent system in place at Lowood. Miss Miller's poor complexion suggests that she is regularly overworked, but it only progresses to the level of purple after an instance of deprivation at the hands of Brocklehurst's miserly policies. When the hungry girls and teachers are served porridge so burnt that it is inedible, Jane comments that Miss Miller "made no great effort to check the general wrath: doubtless she shared in it" (39). As the students and Miss Miller appear to lack adequate nutrition overall, one missed meal seems enough to endanger health and elevate ruddiness to a dangerous purple. Jane notes later that day that "Miss Miller, poor thing! looked purple, weatherbeaten, and overworked" (39). Here the purple complexion represents the lack of adequate nutrition, as well as heating, that Jane, Miss Miller, and the others experience while at Lowood.

Though the poor Miss Miller's purple skin suggests lower-class privation, the purple color of the rich Bertha Mason suggests another type of imbalance, that of heat and overindulgence. The Jamaican Bertha combines the humoral elements of ingestion and climatic influence in her "intemperate and unchaste" behavior (261). Although Bertha is supposedly mad, the text justifies her treatment through the suggestion that it is her own corruption and overindulgence that has "prematurally developed the germs of insanity" inherited from her Jamaican mother (261). The narrative depicts her as surrounded by sin, signaled by her relegation to purple skin. Jane describes Bertha as purple twice in the narrative, the first instance occurring as Jane relates to Rochester the story of Bertha's covert visit to Jane's room in the dead of night. Jane's narration labels

this event as one of the two most psychologically terrifying moments in her life, the other being her childhood imprisonment in the red room. These two trials are also described as the only two times in her life that Jane loses consciousness and are linked together by the undercurrent of color, particularly red and purple, running through the text. Bertha's nighttime escapades are narrated retrospectively the morning after, with Jane describing to Rochester how she awoke in the night to see a figure in the room, reflected in the glass of the mirror. This "savage" face is marked in racialized terms; Jane notes that the "lips were swelled and dark" (242). It is also marked in color, from the "roll of the red eyes" to the "fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments" (242, 248). Last, when Rochester teasingly suggests that ghosts "are usually pale," Jane pronounces the face decidedly "purple" (248). Jane's narrative rejects any association of whiteness with the figure that she saw, suggesting to the reader Bertha's foreign nature before she appears in the text.

When Bertha is introduced, Jane's narration reasserts its emphasis on her purple appearance. When Jane and Rochester's wedding is interrupted by Richard Mason's revelation of his sister's prior claim as Mrs. Rochester, the party troops up to the third story of Thornfield at Rochester's insistence to observe the mental state of his wife Bertha. Jane confirms that Bertha was the midnight visitor to her chamber; she states, "I recognized well that purple face—those bloated features" (250). Here the text mobilizes several registers of symbolism to undercut Bertha's humanity and her lawful rights as Rochester's wife, describing her with bestial, racial, and masculine signifiers.[36] Color is not the least of these registers; Rochester contrasts Jane to Bertha, crying "Compare

these clear eyes with the red balls yonder—this face with that mask—this form to that bulk" (251). Describing Bertha as a "beast" may work to undercut her sanity and rationality (250), but it is the red eyes and purple skin that allow Rochester to compare her face to an inanimate mask. Together, this combination of linguistic markers extinguishes Bertha's humanity, announcing Jane's triumph over her rival in Rochester's affections without allowing the reader's sympathy to transfer from the protagonist to the imprisoned Bertha.

Perhaps because Bertha's humanity is so vehemently denied throughout the course of these two passages (the only appearances Bertha makes in the narrative's action), critics have been determined to reclaim Bertha, collecting facts and figures to provide her character with a narrative of her own. Critical work to historicize the character of Bertha has contextualized the racial and gender politics of the novel; what remains to be discussed is how Brontë's strategic use of color complicates the attempts to reclaim Bertha. Bertha's purple complexion alludes to and encompasses common nineteenth-century racial signifiers, but it is also a figurative description. The figurative nature of the purple skin allows Brontë to resist a singular and definitive reading of Bertha's racial origins and instead reference the complex and indeterminate web of cultural and aesthetic meaning assigned to color. For example, color allows the author to tap into the much longer cultural history of the meanings of purple, which go back to classical and biblical history. These meanings of luxury, avarice, seduction, and betrayal can encompass racial signals of difference, as well as include Bertha's class position as an heiress. Second, purple also carries connotations of medical discourses, including

those of the humors and tropical disease. Last, because purple is the least common skin color in *Jane Eyre*'s established color system, it works to associate Bertha with the monstrous of the Gothic tradition to deny her the humanity that religious tradition and abolitionist discourse were attempting to extend to peoples of all races in the early nineteenth century. If Bertha had been described explicitly as either white or black, it would put her character into a specific, historically contingent position within then-current Western debates over slavery and religion,[37] as well as the social responsibilities of the colonizer towards the colonized people. Portraying Bertha as purple instead signals an ambiguous and figurative evil, effectively denying historicity to this particularly fraught character so that the emphasis and sympathy can reside with protagonist Jane.

First, the use of purple to signal Bertha's seductive nature illustrates purple's association with the body and bodily sin. Although purple, because of its rarity, has been the cherished color of ritual, both religious and royal, it is also the color of corruption. It is the color of wine, Bacchus, blood, excess, blood-in-the-face, purple-fever, bruising, death, and even mourning. Purple is the color of embodiment *par excellence*. The bodily connotations of purple do symbolic work in the representation of Blanche and Rosamond, both of whom are dressed in purple and embody the dangers of the flesh for Rochester and St. John. The absolute moral repugnancy of Bertha as depicted by the text, however, warrants a specialized, and greater, association with the accusation of purple. Of all the purple women, only Bertha is shown to be successful in seducing the male characters into sin: the young Bertha, Rochester reports, was "a fine

woman, in the style of Blanche Ingram; tall, dark, and majestic"; her exotic charms left the inexperienced Rochester "dazzled, stimulated," his senses "excited," and his destiny decided (260). Because it is the corporality of Bertha Mason that first tempts Rochester and later, in her decline, garners the text's revulsion, purple is enacted on the level of her body, rather than through her clothing. If Jane is characterized largely in a spiritual rather than physical manner, her opposite, Bertha, is all animal physicality, devoid of any spiritual force. Her discolored body, half-animal and half-human, is emphasized as large and bulky, excessive even in its size; she is "a big woman, in stature almost equalling her husband, and corpulent besides" (Brontë 250). A woman of "giant propensities" and insatiable appetites (261), even her facial features are "bloated" and "swelled" (250, 242). In fact, the only thing about Bertha that is small is her "pigmy intellect" (261). The enlarged and strangely colored appearance of her body merely marks on her exterior the inclination to physical excess that lies beneath the surface of her skin.

Building on humoral and medical discourses, the exterior state of Bertha's body mirrors the bodily sins that contributed to its owner's madness; she is described by Rochester as "intemperate and unchaste" and has a "violent and unreasonable temper" (261). As Sue Thomas states, her discolored face, bloodshot eyes, and swollen lips are "stock markers of intemperance, a key attribute of the stereotypical white Creole moral degenerate" and would have signaled Bertha's appetite for wine, luxury foods, and sensual pleasure (Thomas 11). Bertha's depiction here is very similar to that of John Reed, whose dissipation "amongst the worst men and the worst women" leads to his

family's ruin and his eventual suicide (77). Although he is English rather than Creole, John receives some of the same racialized descriptors as Bertha; for instance, Bessie refers to the grown John as having "such thick lips" (77). Similarly, through his suicide, which prefigures Bertha's own desperate leap from the battlements of Thornfield Hall, John comes to temporarily share the complexion of Bertha. Mrs. Reed imagines her son in death "with a swollen and blackened face" (198). This description is very similar to the "fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments" in Bertha's "bloated" face (248, 252). The difference between the two is that one description is figurative, as the sickly Mrs. Reed, in her ravings, visualizes her dead boy as "blackened," while Jane presents Bertha's purple and black features as literal. Furthermore, the English John is "sallow" and "bilious" in life (7), and it is only by committing suicide that he takes the last step down the racial and moral hierarchy of skin colors in the novel. In comparison, the Jamaican Bertha's very nature is illustrated as dark, and she lives on indefinitely in her state of purple corruption until she takes her own life, committing the ultimate sin. Though both characters are censured for their wealth and bodily excess, only the foreign Bertha is sentenced to permanent purpleness.

While it is the surface of Bertha that is marked by the unusual hue, there is the sense that the purple is not just an exterior coating, but also something welling up from deep within Bertha herself. The purple description gestures towards Bertha's dangerous Creole blood, carrier of the germs of madness, and visually represents the mixture of wine and blood coursing feverishly throughout her body, rising to her face whenever her passionate nature is inflamed. This blood is barely contained by the membranes of

Bertha's body, swelling and bloating her features, and it is always threatening to spill over into the English gene pool through her lawful conjugal rights. Her purpleness also references the blood that she spills in attacking her own brother, causing a leaking wound that Jane dutifully tends as she watches the life drain away from Mason's "corpse-like face" (180). This attack is made even more repulsive by alluding to Bertha's potential appetite *for* blood, as Mason reports that after biting him, "She sucked the blood: she said she'd drain my heart" (181). Later, Jane echoes Mason's comments as she likens Bertha to "the foul German spectre—the Vampyre" (241). In the text, the blood-like purple signals Bertha's supernatural and bestial qualities as well as her embodiment, illustrating when physicality overtakes spirituality.

The purple coloring is a sign to be read, making Bertha's otherness visible. However, it is not entirely legible as a surface sign: it is a warning that helps the characters recognize the other, but remains as opaque as the skin it inhabits. Jane's strategy of marking her antagonists with color fails to deliver complete legibility because Bertha remains an unpredictable and irrational being whose motivations are indecipherably hidden in the depths of self beneath the surface. Through Bertha, it is revealed that Jane's constructed sign system may have the ability to mark characters through color, but it is also shows the limitations of first person narration, as Jane can never fully know the motivations of other characters. Instead, Jane must rely on her power to dismiss characters from her narrative to keep order. Because Bertha remains a mystery and controls her own method of exit from the text (resisting Rochester and British patriarchy to the end), she also resists Jane's narrative power. To compensate,

Jane uses many different registers to mark Bertha's difference—including animal metaphors, supernatural references, and color coding—as she layers meaning onto her rival in an effort to force a particular interpretation on the reader.

For Brontë, like her narrator, color characterization is about control and power. The skin color markers aim to direct the reader's interpretation of the text, guiding him or her towards the social or moral positions that Brontë herself values. Because her narrative suggests that which is subversive, in its desire to rescue middle-class women from the social and economic power of the upper classes, her narrator must appear morally irreproachable to garner the approval of readers and critics. Color in the novel constitutes a vast semiotic system that attempts to convince readers that the unconventional Jane possesses the ideal combination of moral values and therefore deserves a position of social power. To accomplish this, Jane's monochrome superiority is established through art, fashion, and skin color, while being contrasted against the colorful, decadent, and degenerative characters of the upper classes. In *Jane Eyre*, Brontë capitalizes on color's social and aesthetic meanings to designate and then prioritize her vision of suitable moral and personal qualities, creating a new hierarchy that favors the protagonist's and Brontë's own gendered social positions.

CHAPTER III

BLUE: WILKIE COLLINS'S *POOR MISS FINCH*

Like Jane Eyre, Wilkie Collins's heroine Lucilla Finch also rejects color, particularly dark colors. The difference between the two novels, published almost twenty-five years apart, is that while Charlotte Brontë sanctions Jane's monochrome preference in the name of Protestant morality, Collins disapproves of Lucilla's predilection as prejudice and sets about teaching his heroine a lesson. To accomplish this, he moves beyond Brontë's use of colored complexion markers to imagine a complete skin color transformation in his little known work *Poor Miss Finch* (1872). In the domestic novel, Lucilla's lover, Oscar Dubourg, is transfigured from a wealthy Englishman to a blue other when he takes a medical compound of silver nitrate to control his seizures. Lucilla, whose horror of dark color is presented as part of "her pathology as a blind person" (Nayder, "Blue" 272), must learn to overcome her aversion in order to marry the man she loves. In constructing such a plot, Collins creates an imaginative and sympathetic account of the experience of otherness, marking a significant change in the use of color in the Victorian novel.

Unlike previous works discussed, in which color is used as an accusation of otherness, Collins's novel treats its blue character with compassion. Like Thomas Hardy, whose red character will follow later in the decade, Collins is consistently sympathetic to people on the margins of English society. Throughout *Poor Miss Finch*'s investigation into the experience of blueness, Collins makes clear the connection

between Oscar's color and racial otherness, using Indian and other colonial characters to illustrate that Lucilla's aversion to color is a form of racial prejudice. Through the blind Lucilla, who cannot witness the physical manifestation of color, he eliminates color's physical aspects in order to focus on the social meanings that inform Lucilla's belief in the goodness of light and the evil nature of darkness. Through the blue Oscar and his pale-skinned identical twin, Nugent, Collins investigates the cultural connections made between color and racial identity. In the end, he undercuts the popular western light/dark dichotomy and its racial implications by making the white twin the novel's villain and the blue man its hero. In this domestic novel, Collins attempts to divorce color from its moral meanings, as well as external difference from internal worth, in order to replace the Western light/dark binary so conducive to constructions of racial superiority with a color aesthetics in which black and white appear as merely two hues in a vast continuum of possibilities.

Light/Dark Hierarchies

Collins's treatment of color was not always so progressive. Although his oeuvre illustrates his continual interest in the marginalized or physically disfigured, Collins's early work often depended on the Western polarities of light and dark and good and evil in order to establish characterization and generate moral meaning in a manner similar to that of Brontë. These hierarchies traditionally derive from Christianity, in which "Christ is the light of the world" while the devil is the "prince of darkness" (Pastoureau, *Black* 30), and are later expanded in the Middle Ages to include skin colors, privileging light

skin as beautiful and good and dark skin as ugly and wicked (79-81). In his masterpiece *The Woman in White* (1859-60), published over a decade before *Poor Miss Finch*, Collin makes uses of this light/dark value system to set up a contrast between his two female characters: the fair and fragile Laura Fairlie and the clever, but dark narrator Marian Halcombe. Although Marian is portrayed as charming and intelligent, her dark complexion denies her the romantic attention given to the pale innocence of her half-sister Miss Fairlie.

The Woman in White promotes whiteness in the novel primarily through its female characters Laura Fairlie and Anne Catherick, who dress almost exclusively in white. In the text, Collins plays with slippage between the meanings of whiteness as outlined by Richard Dyer in his influential work *White.* Dyer identifies three "senses" in which whiteness "is felt and understood." He states, "First, white is a category of colour or *hue* . . . Second, white is a category of *skin* colour. Third, white, like any other hue, has *symbolic* connotations" (45). *The Woman in White* makes use of all these meanings of whiteness, emphasizing the two young women's preference for dressing in white hues, their pale skin and coloring, and their symbolic status as virginal maidens. Both Laura and Anne "always wear white" because as children they were encouraged to do so by the late Mrs. Fairlie, who believed that "little girls of [their] pale complexion looked neater and better all in white" (W. Collins, *Woman* 59). Mrs. Fairlie's reasoning confuses the color of the white clothing (hue) with the girls' "pale" complexions (skin color) and the symbolism of white in Western society as representing purity and cleanliness. Anne, who has escaped from a private asylum and wins the sympathy of

another narrator, Walter Hartright, is the woman in white of the book's title, but it is her half-sister Laura, the romantic heroine of the story, who benefits the most clearly from her association with whiteness. On the day Hartright meets Laura, she appears for dinner in a "spotlessly pure" white dress that signifies her unspoiled nature.[38] Hartright is sure that this choice of "plain white muslin," which makes Laura "look less affluent in circumstances than her own governess," is "due to her natural delicacy of feeling and natural intensity of aversion to the slightest personal display of her own wealth" (54). In this case, her white dress not only displays her innocence and modesty, but is also presented as a moral choice: in eschewing color and luxury, Laura exhibits a middle-class morality that identifies her as worthy of Hartright's love.

In contrast to Laura and Anne, the masculine Marian is associated with colors. While Laura dresses for dinner in a gown of pure white, Marian wears one in the "primrose-yellow colour which matches so well with a dark complexion and black hair" (54).[39] In this case, Marian's propensity to color is aligned with her racial otherness, as she chooses her dress to suit her dark complexion. Her dark complexion, in exchange, works in conjunction with her gendered otherness to present her as physically unattractive. When Marian is introduced in the text, Walter notes that her "complexion was almost swarthy, and the dark down on her upper lip was almost a moustache" (32). Although the clever Marian became a favorite of nineteenth-century readers,[40] the plot requires that the hero's romantic interest be directed towards her half-sister Laura Fairlie. The combination of Marian's colorful attire, dark skin, and masculine features presents an unfavorable contrast to Laura's white clothing, white skin, and feminine

charms. Marian herself declares that "I am dark and ugly, and she [Laura] is fair and pretty" (34). For Marian, association with color in the novel works to suggest a physical deviance that undermines her charisma; association with whiteness, on the other hand, symbolizes innocence, modesty, and belonging in the young female characters.

The novel's "overarching symbolic web of whiteness" and "relentless emphasis on white objects" did not go unnoticed by the reading public (Teukolsky 434). One side effect of the enormously popular sensation novel was a general craze for all things *The Woman in White*, "inspir[ing] what would nowadays be called a sales mania and a franchise boom" (Sutherland vii). The commercialism associated with the novel emphasized the hue of white as the symbol or trademark of the book, resulting in "an extraordinary fashion for white dresses, white handbags, white lilies and even what were called 'white' waltzes" (Finlay 141). The spread of white's popularity outside the novel into other cultural spheres, such as the visual and performing arts, reached such an extent that the early 1860s have been referred to in criticism as the "white years" (Daly 1). In these years, London saw the performance of the sensation play *The Colleen Bawn* (1860), whose title "derives from the Irish *cailín bán*, sometimes translated 'darling girl,' but literally meaning white or fair-haired girl" (Daly 1), as well as the exhibition of the American artist James Abbott McNeill Whistler's *The White Girl*. Whistler's painting, later renamed *Symphony in White No. 1: The White Girl,* was advertised by the gallery under the title *The Woman in White*, to better take advantage of the popularity of Collins's novel (Spencer 305).

This cultural craze for white and whiteness initiated by the novel suggests that Collins's subtle critique of his women in white as childlike and mentally unstable went unacknowledged by the general reader, as did his attempt to illustrate that Marian's dark skin and surface ugliness belied a kind and intelligent interiority. This may have been due to Collins's own reliance on the light/dark hierarchy in his characterization, which overshadows the complexities of Marian's characterization. Furthermore, the novel suggests that only the pale Laura is a candidate for marriage to the hero Hartright, despite Marion and Hartright's similar interests and ages. Dark Marian, wonderful as she is, is left no admirers but the jaundiced villain Count Fosco. Marian's general popularity with audiences notwithstanding, *The Woman in White* largely reinforces the conflation of skin color, immorality, and otherness visible in early Victorian literature.

Published over a decade later, *Poor Miss Finch* rewrites *The Woman in White*'s characterization of Laura Fairlie and furthers the work began through the creation of Marian Halcombe. In the later novel, Collins splits the traditional heroine into two female characters in his usual manner: the older widow Madame Pratolungo narrates the story while the young and delicate Lucilla is the focus of the marriage plot. Lucilla even possesses some of the personal characteristics of *The Woman in White*'s Laura Fairlie and Anne Catherick. Like the two young girls, the innocent Lucilla is "fair" and "lovely," appearing in the narrative for the first time in a "pure white robe" that demonstrates her similar aversion to dark colors in dress (13). However, Lucilla, unlike Collins's earlier female characters, is forced to reconcile her "blind horror of anything that is dark" before she can transition into adulthood and marriage (14). *Poor Miss*

Finch also reverses the traditional light/dark duality through the dark skin of its hero, Oscar, and the pale skin of the villainous Nugent. Most importantly, the novel attempts to break down the early modern division made between black and white and the world of color through Oscar, who is not only dark skinned, but also colored blue. In *Poor Miss Finch*, Collins more closely considers the relationship between color, morality, and the social articulations of difference. This reassessment of color in his narrative reflects the larger changes in the role of color in the visual arts that occur during the mid-Victorian era.

The Rise of Color

Michel Pastoureau's research on the history of color establishes how the hues of black and white were removed from the realm of color through a series of events occurring "between the end of the Middle Ages and the seventeenth century" (*Black* 11). Although the color schemes of ancient and medieval societies had depended on a "tripartite organization" of the colors black, white, and red (22),[41] this system was erased in Europe by the Protestant Reformation, which, along with its iconoclasm, waged a moral attack on color that Pastoureau refers to as "chromoclasm" (*Blue* 100). As a result, black and white came to be considered shades rather than hues, therefore gaining in moral value, but losing their status as colors (*Black* 11). The problem was further compounded by Isaac Newton's discovery of the color spectrum in the 1660s, which established a new and scientific "order of colors" that did not include black and white. Pastoureau explains that "Thus for almost three centuries black and white were

considered and experienced as 'noncolors,' even seeming to form their own universe as opposed to the one of colors: 'in black and white' on one side, 'in color' on the other" (*Black* 11).

Collins's reconsideration of color in his later novel reflects the changing status of color in the visual arts during his lifetime. Although not a professional artist, Collins was intimately acquainted with the visual arts; born into a family of artists and art dealers, he was "very much in the society of artists," as he himself described it (Dolin and Dougan 6). His father, William Collins, was a landscape and genre painter and a prominent member of the Royal Academy. Wilkie (full name William Wilkie Collins) was named after his godfather, the celebrated Scottish painter David Wilkie, who was William Collins's close friend and fellow Academician.[42] As a boy, Wilkie Collins received some training in art, and though he lacked the talent of his father and brother, he continued painting as a hobby when he was an adult and even exhibited a painting, entitled *The Smuggler's Retreat* (now lost), at the Royal Academy in 1849 (Dolin 19). Collins's early literary career built upon his knowledge of the visual arts; he reviewed art exhibitions as a fledgling journalist in the 1850s, and his first published book, *Memoirs of the Life of William Collins, Esq., R.A.* (1849), was both a sympathetic treatment of his late father's life and "something of a history of the 'English School' in the nineteenth century" (Dolin and Dougan 6, 8). His childhood immersion in the world of the visual arts and later work as a journalist go far towards explaining what Clare Douglass calls the "predisposition towards the visual" present in Collins's literary works (59).

Although Collins's *Memoirs* and early critical reviews reflect his father's relatively conservative academic viewpoint, Collins was also on the front lines of artistic innovation in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was intimately associated with one of the first *avant-garde* art movements through his brother, Charles (Charley) Allston Collins. Charles was a painter who regularly exhibited at the Royal Academy and a close friend of John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.[43] The Pre-Raphaelites and another group of painters, known as "The Clique," would meet often at the Collins's house in Blandford Square, which the two brothers shared with their mother (Dolin 9).[44] Through the Pre-Raphaelites, Wilkie Collins would have been very familiar with the innovative artistic techniques through which the Brotherhood forwarded their mission of recovering the medieval sensibility that existed in art before the reemergence of classicism in the Renaissance. Among these methods was a re-evaluation of the place of color in the artistic hierarchy.

The Pre-Raphaelites, and the later French Impressionists, set about restoring color to the place it had occupied before the Renaissance division of *disegno* and *colore*. In particular, the Brotherhood rejected the dark and somber tonal range of early nineteenth-century art, as exemplified in the works of academicians such as William Collins and David Wilkie. Millais and Hunt developed a new technique, called the Wet-White Technique, to replicate the brilliant color of medieval painting. In the process, a fresh layer of white paint was laid over a hardened white ground just before painting. "Over this wet ground," Hunt instructed, "the colour (transparent and semi-transparent) should be laid with light subtle brushes and the touches must be made so tenderly that

the ground below shall not be worked up" (198). The combination of small brushstrokes and transparent color over wet white paint resulted in a highly luminous and "enamel-like" paint surface (Sitwell 58). Collins, of course, would have been well aware of the process behind his friends' technical innovations, as well as how his brother Charles's work, exemplified in the painting *Berengaria's Alarm for the Safety of her Husband, Richard Coeur de Lion*, closely imitated the "intense coloration," exact details, and preference for medieval subjects found in the Pre-Raphaelite style (Dolin and Dougan 8).

The Pre-Raphaelite emphasis on color also derived from their practice of painting from nature in the open air, in which they "abjur[ed] altogether brown foliage, smoky clouds, and dark corners [of the previous studio style], painting the whole out of doors, direct on the canvas itself, with every detail and with the sunlight brightness of the day itself" (Hunt 62). The combination of heightened color tones and direct sunlight both depended on and limited the role of pure white in painting as the century progressed. Instructional manuals, such as that of Karl Robert (née George Meusnier), stipulated that when painting on *en plein air,* "A white wall in full sunlight is never white: it is pinkish white, yellowish white, greenish white, according to the reflections which it receives" (qtd. in Gage, *Culture* 223). Similarly, *plein airisme* was notable for "hardly leaving room for true blacks" in its emphasis on "luminous colors" (Pastoureau, *Black* 176). This shift away from the chiaroscuro shading of the previous century, as exemplified in the works of Thomas Gainsborough and Sir Joshua Reynolds ("Sir Sloshua" to the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood), can be in seen in Hunt's *Our English Coasts, 1852* (later

retitled *Strayed Sheep*). Though it is ostensibly a painting of white sheep on a green grass background, the sheep's coats are represented in wild assortment of complementary colors, in which "blues and mauves lie next to oranges and yellows" (Townsend, Ridge, and Hackney 159). The "intense hues of sunstruck fleece" mingle inextricably with the dashes of colored pigment that mark each sheep's owner like a brand (Ribner 45). What little white is present is used sparingly for highlights or for the depiction of the wild flowers, while the painting's shadows are not black, but made up of "deep purples and blues" (Sitwell 58). *Our English Coasts* illustrates the diminishing role of pure whites and blacks in painting as color's role was elevated in the artistic hierarchy.

The Pre-Raphaelites' use of color, like that of the Impressionists after them, depended on the new color technologies developing around mid-century. Rapid technological development of new synthetic pigments and dyes resulted in lower prices, more colors, and greater longevity in paint selection. Synthetic blues had been available since the early eighteenth century (Pastoureau, *Blue* 132), but the invention of aniline dyes by Sir William Perkin in 1856 sparked a great technological race to create more and more colors (Garfield 8). Whereas older, organic pigments often faded with time, the new synthetic colors promised to retain their bright hues. When the paints used by the Pre-Raphaelites were found to have "lasted extremely well," especially when compared to the "physical decay of many pictures by Reynolds, Turner and Etty, and the late works of Wilkie," the Royal Academy was urged to include more "instruction in the chemistry of colors" in its curriculum (Gage, *Meaning* 153). In 1871, the same year that

Collins drafted *Poor Miss Finch*, the Academy founded a professorship of chemistry to teach color mixing and selection (153).

The innovations of another chemist, Michel Eugène Chevreul, provided the impetus that marked the end of line's dominance over color. Chevreul was hired by the French government to improve their dyeing industry, and his extensive study of color's optical effects in fabric led him to the idea of complementary (or opposite) colors and the law of simultaneous contrast. When art critic Charles Blanc presented Chevreul's ideas in his *Grammaire des arts du dessin* (*The Grammar of Painting and Engraving*) in 1867, painters learned that they could "heighten their contrasts by juxtaposing complementary colors" rather than through the use of shading or line (Gage, *Meaning* 196). With this technical advance, "artists could dispense with a certain number of pictorial traditions, notably the predominance of drawing" (Pastoureau, *Black* 176). Instead, artists such as the Impressionists and Pointillists were able to "model[] form through color rather than line" (Helmreich 442), challenging the necessity of line and shading as techniques.

All this change resulted not only in the promotion of color in the academic hierarchy, but also led to a reconsideration of black and white's place in the artistic world. The expatriate American artist James McNeill Whistler, who lived in both England and France, did much to promote the cause of color in British, French, and American art. One of the first proponents of "art for art's sake," Whistler began naming many of his paintings after musical terms to emphasize the tonal qualities of the composition over the narratives preferred in history painting, the most prestigious of

Academic painting genres at the time. These works' subtitles emphasized the colors prominent in the composition as if they were the subjects, as seen in his *Nocturne: Blue and Gold: Old Battersea Bridge; Arrangement in Pink, Red, and Purple*; and *Arrangement in Grey and Black: The Artist's Mother*. By denying the necessity of narrative in painting, Whistler undermined not only the genre hierarchies of the Academy but also the role of line as the "expression of the idea" in the Aristotelian sense (Lichtenstein 149).[45] Most importantly for this discussion, his work, which made no distinction between "arrangements" in monochrome and those in color, challenged the contemporary treatment of black and white as shades and placed them back into the world of color.

His investment in tonalism led him to question and demystify the symbolic meaning of many colors, including the privileged white. Although his painting *The White Girl*, like Collins's novel, plays on the slippage between the color of the subject's dress, the subject's skin, and the symbolic meanings of whiteness, Whistler's work runs counter to the 1860s validation of whiteness by illustrating the difference between surface appearance and reality. The painting, shown in a private gallery in London after its rejection by the Royal Academy, depicts a young girl in the virginal white dress of a new bride. Yet Whistler deconstructs the symbolic meanings of white as innocence by choosing his mistress, Joanna Hiffernan, as his model and painting her standing on a sexually suggestive wolf skin and holding a broken lily to signal her lost virginity. He also deconstructs the meanings of whiteness as a racial characteristic by playing up Hiffernan's Irish heritage. His painting highlights Hiffernan's nationality through the

prominence of her red hair in order to remind viewers that the white girl of the painting belonged to a group whose whiteness was then in question. Even the painting's title, *The White Girl*, "must have reminded at least some viewers of the play *The White Boy* (1862)" (Daly 11), which took as its subject the eighteenth-century Irish insurgents (the Whiteboys) who had fought against English rack-renting practices. Hiffernan's prominent red hair, and Whistler's own friendship with several members of the then-current Fenian movement for Irish independence, worked to remind English viewers of their oppression of people of the white race in the country next door.

The last act in questioning the meanings of whiteness comes as in the presentation of the White Girl's skin. As Finlay points out, the representation of Hiffernan's face is actually "quite dark" in comparison to that of her white dress (127), suggesting the wide variety of white skin tones and demystifying the white goddess of Academic history painting and portraiture.[46] Whistler's treatment of Hiffernan's skin contrasts vividly with that of Academic tradition represented by artists such as Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough, in whose canonical works one can see the indistinguishable blending of the borders between white fabric and white female skin which represents the "utter erasure of skin-colour pigmentation" in eighteenth-century portraiture (Rosenthal 588). Angela Rosenthal argues that this "outright fetishization of the white body" derives directly from the Enlightenment's "emerging systematic racial and thus racist discourses" (588). Whistler's painting, in contrast, not only rejects earlier painting's "transcend[ence of] the actual multicolored nature of bodies" by its presentation of Hiffernan's pale, but not pure white complexion (567), it also points to the presence of

the white other within European society and the role of the artist in shaping racial understandings of whiteness.

Furthermore, Whistler draws attention to the aesthetics of white and whiteness. His use of an "impasto, thickly layered pigment" in "shades of off-white" was seen as visually displeasing as well as in violation of mid-nineteenth century conceptions of complementary colors (Teukolsky 435); Dante Gabriel Rossetti illustrated the aggressive qualities of the painting when he likened Whistler's "tube of white lead" to a "punch in the head" in a comedic, and not necessarily friendly, limerick (Daly 11).[47] The later title of *Symphony in White, No. 1* draws attention to the color and texture of paint itself (Zinc White No. 1 was the name of a shade of paint) in an attempt to draw attention to technical aspects of painting and their aesthetic appreciation (23).[48] The painting certainly drew popular attention to its use of color, as critics complained that anyone could tell that it also "included yellow, brown, blue, red, and green" (Finlay 128). By making the white of the painting inseparable from the other colors present, Whistler emphasized that white *was* a color, no more and no less than the others, and certainly not the privileged hue society imagined it. In effect, Whistler succeeded in doing what Collins would try soon after in literature—in claiming an appreciation of art for art's sake, he divorced the aesthetic meanings of painting's shades and hues from the common social and symbolic meanings of whiteness.

Color and Vision

The general elevation of the position of color in the visual arts may have led Collins to reconsider the role of color in the later *Poor Miss Finch*. Like Whistler's painting, the novel treats white as merely one shade in a vast color spectrum, and sets about disproving the perceived ties between light skin and innate goodness. He had begun this project with Marian Halcombe of *The Woman in White*, but his attempt was undercut by his simultaneous veneration of whiteness in the upper-class heroine Laura Fairlie. In 1872, Collins, now well established in his field, was better positioned to question the literary conflation of inner morality with surface color more completely in *Poor Miss Finch*, not only by assigning dark blue skin to the hero and light skin to the (biologically identical) villain, but also through the depiction of the valiant but brown-complexioned Doctor Pratolungo and the inexplicable descent of the pale Dubourgs from a dark-skinned (but presumably English) father. In doing so, Collins "suggest[s] that racial identities are socially constructed rather than inborn" (Nayder, "Collins" 149). Through the inclusion of characters of all colors and complexions, Collins unhinges the uneven binary of light and dark, substituting an artistic understanding of color's multiplicity that emphasizes aesthetics over racial difference.

After his early success with *The Woman in White*, Collins's work became increasingly concerned with the depiction and critique of social injustices, as seen in his "so-called 'thesis' novels" (Peters xiii). His writing also became more invested in the consequences of British imperial conquest, "addressing various issues raised by empire building . . . [including] the grounds and significance of racial identity and difference"

(Nayder, "Collins" 140). Collins's career exhibits his sympathy for racial others under British rule, as in his contribution to "The Perils of Certain English Prisoners" (a collaboration with friend and mentor Charles Dickens), where he suggested that the Indian Mutiny was largely initiated by Britain's own "colonial abuses" (145).[49] In *The Moonstone*, he paints a sympathetic picture of the Hindu guards from whom the moonstone was originally stolen, as well as of the sad case of Ezra Jennings, whose outcast status due to his mixed racial origins is signaled through his "gypsy complexion" and "piebald hair," a combination of black hair interspersed with sections of shocking white (324). In his oeuvre, Collins not only consistently sympathizes with the trials of racial others in Britain and abroad, but also conducts an investigation into the nature of race itself; for instance, in his play *Black and White*, the racial standing of the main character, a French nobleman visiting the West Indies, shifts with the discovery of his true parentage: when his mother is revealed to hane been a quadroon, his legal status alters from white to colored, and he is consequently sold into slavery.[50] *Black and White* suggests that race is not internally fixed, but externally defined through social constructions.

In *Poor Miss Finch*, Collins continues *Black and White*'s investigation into the biological and social meanings of racial difference. Though subtitled "A Domestic Story" and set in the isolated, rural landscape of England's South Down Hills, *Poor Miss Finch* is actually international and interracial in its scope. Madame Pratolungo, a "worldly French widow" of revolutionary sentiments (Sparks 4), narrates the story, which pivots on the arrival of the vulgar but affectionate German surgeon Herr Grosse,

who cures Lucilla's blindness. Threads of action take place in England, France, Italy, America, and the Arctic regions. The novel is also invested in the colonial sphere, as several characters, including the family of the heroine, emigrate from England in search of a better life. The poor Reverend Finch, his fertile second wife Mrs. Finch, and their numerous offspring settle in an unnamed "distant colon[y]" in the final pages of the novel, where the Reverend is promoted to a Bishop (W. Collins 426). Along with presenting the colonies as an opportunity for those Englishmen whose families outnumber their means, Collins addresses the impact of colonization at home on English soil by populating his novel with various representatives of colonial India. Furthermore, Collins sets *Poor Miss Finch*'s action in 1858, the last year of the Indian Mutiny, an event that "racialized British relations with Indians in ways that were never forgotten" (Walsh 112). Lucilla's initial fear of the dark other reflects these racial tensions present in England, especially those fueled by depictions of Hindu and Muslim men as sexual predators to white women. Yet Collins was known to be sympathetic to the plight of the colonized in India, and in his novel, he presents Lucilla's fears as unfounded and unreasonable through a series of peaceful encounters with Indian representatives in social settings. In painting a picture of an England peopled by Indian subjects and Indian officers, Collins begins revising the conceptions of racial difference and promoting a larger British identity inclusive of the peoples of the Empire.

To do so, Collins turns his attention to color and the social predilection for using color to discuss race. Collins presents a literal interpretation of what it means to be colored, as he envisions the experiences of a white man, Oscar Dubourg, whose skin

turns blue. To increase the pathos of Oscar's experience of otherness, Collins also creates a heroine who believes in the goodness of white while irrationally fearing dark colors. Both Oscar's color change and Lucilla's blindness allow Collins to conduct an investigation into the nature of color. Color is a complex phenomenon, at once "subjective and objective, physically fixed and culturally constructed" (qtd. in Gage, *Meaning* 7). Because blue people do not exist in nature, Oscar's skin color dismisses any discussion of the physical and material manifestations of blueness, leaving Collins to focus on the hue's social meanings. Similarly, Lucilla's lack of vision sets aside the physiological aspects of color perception, leaving only the "culturally constructed" understandings of color that she gathers from the people around her. The two characters combined help Collins to start to tease out the relationship between race and color in the social imagination.

First, Collins begins by conducting an investigation into the nature of blueness. His depiction of Oscar's color change is modeled on the historical use of nitrate of silver in medicine and its common side effect of agryria, a skin discoloration caused by exposure to chemical silver that remains irreversible today. Despite this side effect, nitrate of silver was prescribed through the mid-nineteenth century (Peters xii); Collins's close friend Charles Dickens was briefly treated with it for a skin disorder in 1861, with the result that it "turn[ed] him blue in spots" and drove him to seek refuge in the private society of Collins's lively home (Davis 225). Yet despite this realistic framework, *Poor Miss Finch* was not well received by the public, who found the plot improbable and complicated; particularly objectionable was Oscar's skin transformation. A reviewer for

The Nation asked, "For what is the aim of this story? That the blind should marry the dark-blue? There is then an excellent opening for some novelist, distracted for a plot, to write about the love of the color-blind for the jaundiced" (qtd. in Page 199). This reaction, which focuses primarily on the absurdity of the color and blindness motifs, seems to indicate that the Victorian audience did not read the connection between Oscar's skin color transformation and racial otherness as overly explicit.

The critical reaction suggests that blueness could be seen as non-threatening. Although the novel plays on the cultural association of color with otherness, blueness distances Oscar's otherness from reality—his blueness seems so bizarre that it flies under the popular radar, because it seems merely an artistic fancy, a privilege of the literary imagination. After all, Oscar remains biologically white. Collins was successful in what Lillian Nayder claims was his real objective: to convey his racial commentary through subtext in order for the novel to "pass as 'proper'" for a conservative readership ("Blue" 279). It is in the choice of blueness that this move of indirect subversion is accomplished, because it can figure Oscar's difference as aesthetic and chemical rather than biological. The continual neglect of the novel in critical studies, along with claims such as that of editor Catherine Peters that the novel "is exceptionally free from calls for reform of the law or society" (vii), illustrates that the novel is still inaccurately regarded as apolitical in theme in part because of this emphasis on blueness.

Never very popular with Victorian readers, *Poor Miss Finch* has also been relatively overlooked in Collins studies, though it has enjoyed a limited amount of scholarly attention in the past decade. This recent work has often centered on reading

the blind Lucilla through the lens of disability studies in order to establish Collins's sympathy with the "disfigured" or marginalized characters. In comparison, very little work comments on what Collins names as Oscar's "blue disfigurement" (135). Only two critical articles currently address the nature of Oscar's strange color change: Nayder's "'Blue Like Me': Collins, *Poor Miss Finch*, and the Construction of Racial Identity" and Samuel Gladden's "Spectacular Deception: Closets, Secrets, and Identity in Wilkie Collins's *Poor Miss Finch*." Nayder's article provides a direct, and convincing, reading of "the racial significance [given] to Oscar's altered skin color" (274), while Gladden reads Oscar's blue skin as a sign of his sexual and gender deviance.[51] However, neither of these explorations of Oscar's otherness evinces interest in what blueness, or color in general, means in Collins's narrative.

In fact, Gladden repeatedly dismisses the importance of Oscar's blueness, calling "Collins's choice of blue as a marker of difference . . . a purely arbitrary one," in which "blueness may be replaced by any signifier of otherness" (473). Because he makes the claim that color's linguistic meanings "cannot be 'fixed'" (476), blue is, for Gladden, "meaningless" and an "empty signifier" (473, 474). However, the poststructuralist determination that language is arbitrary does not necessitate that Collins's choice of blue was arbitrary. As previously determined in the discussion of Brontë's use of purple in *Jane Eyre*, it is precisely the unfixed nature of color, the multiple social and historical meanings that a culture assigns to a hue, that makes color a desirable metonym for an author. Collins doesn't choose blue because it is an empty signifier, but because it is full

of its own connotations and cultural meanings. So, one might ask, what does blueness mean?

The meanings of Oscar's blueness can be as varied as those of the color blue itself. In Western culture, blue is often connected to illness, and could be representative of Oscar's epilepsy, which stems from an injury to his head in a robbery. Although blue has been often associated with mental depression or sadness since the early modern era ("Blue," def. 3a), the color can also suggest the improvement of physical health. In French, the phrase "*enfant voué au bleu*" refers to the practice in which parents would dress a child who recovered from illness "in blue from hat to boot" in gratitude to the Virgin Mary, whose liturgical color is blue (Finlay 293). Oscar's transition to blueness follows this tradition as it marks his recovery from his seizures and a return to physical health.

Paradoxically, however, blue has been historically viewed as unholy, despite its common association with the Virgin Mary. In the medieval religious art of Western Europe, devils were sometimes depicted as blue, particularly in stained-glass work (Pastoureau, *Blue* 39). [52] In the eighteenth century, this iconography was combined with the association of blue with sadness to create the term "blue-devilled," which described a person in a depressive state, as in George Colman the Younger's 1798 one-act farce "Blue Devils." As late as the 1830s, graphic artist George Cruikshank published a print entitled *The Blue Devils*, in which miniature blue devils symbolize the depressive thoughts of a debtor contemplating suicide. Herr Grosse makes reference to this saying when he states to Lucilla in his heavy accent, "Your English climates sometimes gives

your English blue devil to foreign mens like me" (W. Collins, *Poor* 362). Likewise, Madame Pratolungo also may have been thinking of this tradition when she describes a blue man she meets in Paris as "devilish" (105). In other situations, blue can have class-based meanings, and could be read to represent the wealthy Oscar's status as a blue blood, a phrase derived to distinguish the fair upper classes, who had skin "so pale and translucent that it let the veins show through," from the sun-bronzed peasants who worked in the fields (Pastoureau, *Black* 172).

The color blue is also somewhat racialized in nineteenth-century English language and society, particularly when associated with blackness. For instance, while most of Cruikshank's devils and imps are white figures wearing blue clothing, one is pictured as having blue skin. This devil, hanging from the mantel like a monkey and tempting the debtor towards suicide by offering a knife or machete, is Africanized through his caricatured features, including large lips, small loincloth, and an elaborately ridiculous hairstyle consisting of gathered tufts of hair sticking straight up from the scalp. The combination of the two colors in the adjective "Blue-black," used by Collins to describe the hue of Oscar's skin (256), was a relatively recent word that the Oxford English Dictionary dates from 1823 ("Blue-black," def. a). Like many other color names, it is also the name of a particular type of pigment; blue-black is a form of carbon-based pigment made by charring organic materials such as coal, bone, or even desiccated grapevines to produce "beautiful bluish blacks" (Douma, par. 6). However, the artistic uses of the word quickly expanded to designate human difference, used to describe the "blue-black locks of a North American squaw" or the dark black skin of the African by

mid-century ("Blue-black," def. b). This usage of "blue-black" may be related to the contemporary belief that any African heritage in a white person could be seen in a "bluish tinge" at the base of his or her fingernails, a racial sign that was cited in works by Eugene Sue, Mark Twain, and Rudyard Kipling (Sollors 143-44).[53] The two colors are combined in the short story "Black and Blue," which describes the adventures of Chandee, a black boy with light blue eyes, whose unusual coloring is the result of the interracial marriage of his English father and "Mahommedan" mother (Nayder, "Blue" 275). Nayder explains that this 1856 story by John Lang could not have escaped Collins's notice, as it was published by Dickens's *Household Words* while Collins was on the staff.

Clearly the combination of blue and black could be related not only to Africa, but also to the Indian subcontinent. I argue that, given the historical context of *Poor Miss Finch*'s setting, the use of blue is a technique that Collins uses to keep India on the fringes of the narrative. Blue is famously the color of Krishna, the Hindu god with the "blue or black face" who "dances through the world, making both love and fun" (Finlay 342). Oscar's particular shade of blue-black also calls to mind the dark blue of indigo, a dye whose name derives "from the Greek term meaning 'from India'" (319). Indigo, as a profitable commodity, possesses its own imperial and industrial history that haunts Collins's novel with the narratives of forced labor and colonial exploitation.

A valuable colorant, indigo has been the desired object of many European merchants and planters, who turned to the new world to make their fortunes. Originally grown in Gujarat in Western India and exported by the East India Company, its

cultivation shifted to the West Indies with European expansionism. Indigo plants needed a large amount of tending and labor to produce high yields of colorant, and European planters found the West Indian slavery system to be the easiest way to produce such labor. This close relationship between indigo and slavery meant that "The word[s] 'indigo' . . . [was] widely used with a racial, even racist, meaning in British English" (Dyer 96). In response to disruptions caused by rebellions in the West Indies and the American south in the early nineteenth century, indigo's production shifted back to India, this time in the Eastern region of Bengal. The years 1858-59, in which Collins set his novel, not only reference the conclusion of the Indian Mutiny in 1858, but also may also have brought to the minds of its contemporary readers the Bengal indigo disturbances of 1859. These disturbances, also known as the Blue Mutiny, "became headline news in London" (Balfour-Paul 73), and the English anxiously followed the debates between missionaries and planters involved in the indigo industry in the following years. Nerves were still raw over the Indian Mutiny, and, in Bengal, the bad feelings were compounded by a corrupt system in which the Indian peasants were forced to grow the indigo on their own land—often at the expense of rice production, their primary food supply—and "kept in permanent debt" by the greedy planters (71). According to Jenny Balfour-Paul, "Resentment boiled over in the autumn of 1859, with huge demonstrations, rioting, and acts of violence in the indigo districts of Lower Bengal" (73). News of this violence spread quickly to England through the efforts of missionary James Long, an opponent of the actions of the planter classes, who, like their compatriots in the West Indies, had long been viewed as greedy, ill-bred, and potentially

embarrassing to the British colonial project. One of the long-term effects "of the controversy was to rekindle the racial antagonism which had been smoldering during the thirteen months following the brutal Sepoy Mutiny" (Kling 103), reminding British and Indians alike that the peace reached in 1858 was far from permanent. In setting the novel in 1859, Collins connects blueness and racial unrest, gesturing towards the plight of the brown men of Britain's empire.

Difference, then, is figured in the novel not only through the color blue, an unusual hue for human skin, but also through its connections to the color brown, which represents a more realistic human skin color and an entire population of British subjects. There are several blue characters besides Oscar who have also been discolored by silver nitrate, while the brown characters consist of both Indians and Europeans. Lucilla meets with a "dark brown . . . Hindoo" at a dinner party (118), several Indian officers and servants are mentioned in the narrative, and Madame Pratolungo describes her deceased French husband as having been a "fine mahogany brown all over" (74). Throughout the novel, the blue and brown characters move in and out of the complex plot, eventually intermingling near the end of the text in the figure of a blue man who has returned from India. The analogy drawn between blue and brown people both mimics and mocks the social practice of using color to signal biological difference. This practice derives from the use of color as a "classifying function" in the sciences, particularly in "zoology, botany, cartography, medicine" and, later, race science (Pastoureau, *Black* 155). But in both its common and scientific form, it also requires significant slippage between the meaning of colors as hues and as human skin tones. In *Poor Miss Finch*, Collins

illustrates the faulty logic of this practice; people, he implies, cannot be color-coded like flowers or collections, nor can skin color clearly designate racial origin. Lucilla, who fails to make the distinction between colors in aesthetic decorations and the color of people's skin, illustrates the dangerous consequences of leaving the connection between color and race implicit. In investigating the nature of color, Collins reevaluates white's privileged position as racial classification and instead resituates white in the aesthetic realm of the color spectrum as only one shade among many.

In the way of a brief amendment, it must be pointed out that, however daring Collins's experiment with the viewpoint of the other, it is only acceptable to its assumed audience because the colored other is, underneath it all, still a white man. Although Oscar's discoloration is permanent, his twin brother's near-constant presence serves as a reminder to the reader that Oscar is symbolically, but not biologically, a racial other. The text begins by emphasizing Oscar's "beautiful complexion" in its natural white state (110), and then reinforces Oscar's whiteness through the identical appearance of his twin, Nugent, who appears only after Oscar's transition to blueness. When Nugent and Oscar are first seen together, Madame Pratolungo relates her "Astonishment at the extraordinary resemblance between them" (135). They are described as "Exactly alike in their height, in their walk, in their features, and in their voices. Both with the same coloured hair and the same beardless faces . . . And, to crown it all, there was the complexion which Oscar had lost for ever (just a shade darker perhaps) found again on Nugent's cheeks!" (134).[54] By emphasizing "the terrible contrast of color between the brother who bore the blue disfigurement of the drug, and the brother who was left as

Nature had made him," Collins plays up Oscar's external otherness (134-5). However, Nugent also serves as a constant reminder of Oscar as "Nature had made him," reinforcing Oscar's true white status through his own pale complexion and identical genes. Oscar is really just "passing" as the other, just as the novel itself is passing as a harmless love story.

Although it is Oscar who experiences the shift from belonging to otherness, the novel actually focuses more on the struggles of Lucilla, because both Oscar and Lucilla's happiness depends on Lucilla overcoming her fear and learning the lesson of acceptance. The close connection between Lucilla and the narrator, who is Lucilla's companion, also emphasizes the daily experiences of the blind Lucilla over those of the colored Oscar, perhaps because her blindness allows Collins to further his explorations in color through an investigation into the nature of vision itself. *Poor Miss Finch*'s presentation of Lucilla's blindness is "carefully researched," as Collins based his account of Lucilla's fear of dark colors on the records of the historical surgeon William Cheselden (Peters vii-xi). Lucilla is described as having been blinded by the development of cataracts in both her eyes at the age of one, and she is said to retain no memory of the time in which she could see. Therefore, her conception of the world around her is ruled by her highly developed senses of touch and hearing; visual concepts such as color are particularly problematic for her. In exploring Lucilla's rather fanciful notions of color, Collins, in effect, divorces the social meanings of color from the physiological aspects of color perception. The novel illustrates that Lucilla's exaggerated preference for light colors (of whose manifestations in the physical world she can have

no true conception) must derive from the societal preference that favors light over dark. The character of Lucilla and her fear of dark people and objects enables Collins to isolate the social meanings of color in an investigation that includes not only the nature of vision and perception, but extends to the racial meanings of colors, or how race becomes figured through color in Western society.

From her first introduction, Lucilla's character illustrates the religious roots of the Western privileging of light over dark: her very name originates from the Latin word for light, while her person is described as bearing a "startling" resemblance to the Virgin Mary in Raphael's masterpiece *The Madonna di San Sisto* (13). She explains to Madame Pratolungo, her newly arrived companion, that "I have the oddest ideas in this blind head of mine" (74). She admits, "I associate light . . . with all that is beautiful and heavenly—and dark with all that is vile and horrible and devilish" (221). This association, though built on Western light/dark hierarchy, is grossly exaggerated in Lucilla's mind, described as "a fanciful growth" resulting from the "morbid accident, of her blindness" (154). Because Lucilla is a young woman of independent means, residing in a separate wing of the Dimchurch rectory from her father and stepmother, she has been able to arrange her domestic surroundings in accordance with her "favourite fancies and illusions" (15). Her home is "gaily decorated" with "bright" hangings and "creamy white" architectural features (13). Madame Pratolungo notes that "Nowhere down the whole extent of the place was so much as a single morsel of dark color to be seen anywhere" (13). Lucilla's dislike of dark colors extends not only to her own dress, but also to that of her companions; she pleads with Madame Pratolungo to "wear pretty

bright colours, to please me!" (14-15). When Madame Pratolungo arrives wearing a "dark purple" dress, Lucilla claims to be able to feel the presence of the dark coloring and insists on picking out another dress for her companion to change into before dinner (15). Although Lucilla admits that her fear of dark things is "unreasonable," she begs for "allowances" to be made for her blind state (118). She tells Madame Pratolungo, "Blame my blindness, dear, don't blame me. If I could only see—" (160). Madame Pratolungo envisions "what it is [like] to have, at one and the same time, the blessing of imagination, and the curse of blindness" (160), and, at least at the beginning, compassionately forgives her "poor" blind charge her faults.

Although previously indulged by her friends, Lucilla's irrational prejudices become no longer acceptable to the other characters when they shift from a particular taste in dress and décor to a bias that affects other people. Because Lucilla's color prejudice does not allow her to distinguish between dark objects and dark people—Madame Pratolungo relates to the reader that "There was no reasoning with her against her blind horror of dark shades of color, whether seen in men, women, or things" (74)—the result is more than a few hurt feelings. For instance, although Madame Pratolungo accepts Lucilla's domestic arrangements and wears light colors to please her, her feelings are injured when Lucilla brags of Oscar's "bright and fair" complexion. Lucilla declares idly, "If I married a man with a dark complexion, and if I recovered my sight afterwards, I should run away from him." Madame Pratolungo confesses to the reader, "This singular prejudice of hers against dark people was a little annoying to me on personal grounds. It was a sort of reflection on my own taste. Between ourselves, the

late Doctor Pratolungo was of a fine mahogany brown all over" (74). Madame Pratolungo takes umbrage at Lucilla's pronouncement because it implies that only external appearances truly matter. Madame Pratolungo remembers her "noble husband" as a great "patriot" who devoted his life to "destroying tyrants" and fighting for freedom in South America (1), and she regards his "brown complexion and one lame leg" as the external proofs of his selfless dedication to helping others (2). Similarly, when Lucilla hears from Oscar that "his father had been a dark man," she reports that her "delicacy had at once taken the alarm." She tells Madame Pratolungo that Oscar "speaks very tenderly of his dead father . . . It may hurt him if he finds out the antipathy I have to dark people. Let us keep it to ourselves" (110). Although Lucilla is considerate enough of Oscar's feelings to hide her "alarm" at his father's dark complexion, she does not attempt to overcome it. At this point in the novel, it is made clear that Lucilla's inability to distinguish between dark things and dark people is hurtful to the people around her.

Once it begins to negatively affect the feelings of others, Lucilla's fear of dark colors must be confronted and then excised from her consciousness. Although Lucilla continues to refer to her distaste for darkness as an "antipathy," Madame Pratolungo has begun to view it as a "singular" and "stupid prejudice" (74, 123); Oscar, as well, refers to her "strange prejudice" when he learns through Reverend Finch of her rude behavior to an Indian man while she is visiting her aunt (117). Lucilla's Aunt Batchford is the first character to protest openly against Lucilla's prejudice, setting the example for proper behavior early in the novel when she refuses to countenance Lucilla's impolite behavior towards her guests. Lucilla writes to her father to explain the explicitly

racialized incident in which she fancifully and fearfully reacts to the presence of a "Hindoo gentleman" at her aunt's dinner party:

> Last week, there was a dinner-party here; and, among the guests, was a Hindoo gentleman (converted to Christianity) to whom my aunt has taken a great fancy. While the maid was dressing me, I unluckily inquired if she had seen the Hindoo—and, hearing that she had, I still more unfortunately asked her to tell me what he was like. She described him as being very tall and lean, with a dark brown complexion and glittering black eyes. My mischievous fancy instantly set to work on this horrid combination of darknesses. Try as I might to resist it, my mind drew a dreadful picture of the Hindoo, as a kind of monster in human form. I would have given worlds to have been excused from going down into the drawing-room. At the last moment I was sent for, and the Hindoo was introduced to me. The instant I felt him approaching, my darkness was peopled with brown demons. He took my hand. I tried hard to control myself—but I really could not help shuddering and starting back when he touched me. (118)

In this passage, Collins makes the connection between Lucilla's fear of dark things and the fear of racial difference. The passage focuses on the Hindu man's coloring, particularly the Hindu man's "dark brown complexion" and "glittering black eyes," which Lucilla imagines as a "horrid combination of darknesses." Collins uses color to introduce Lucilla's reaction to the Hindu, but the description also emphasizes other

bodily features that intimidate her, including his "tall and lean" stature, which are unrelated to her fear of darkness.

Her panic only increases when the Hindoo gentleman is seated next to her at dinner, and she imagines that "I had long, lean, black-eyed beings all around me; perpetually growing in numbers, and pressing closer and closer on me as they grew. It ended in my being obliged to leave the table" (118). Lucilla's imaginings reflect the general Victorian fear of the mob, but also the Victorian woman's "sexual panic" in the presence of the racial other, a reaction that was "fueled by the rape narratives in which the political history of the Indian Mutiny was recast" (Nayder, "Blue" 273).[55] Although Lucilla begins by describing her reaction to the "horrid combination of darknesses" (W. Collins, *Poor* 118), by the end of her letter, the focus of her fear shifts from color and darkness (the object of Lucilla's supposedly pathological fear) to the physicality of the racial other. Her narrative combines color references with descriptions of bodily difference and supernatural depictions, in which she uses the phrases "monster" and "demons," as well as omitting the common preceding descriptor of "human" before her use of "beings" (118). This passage illustrates how easily Lucilla slips from the description of biological difference to questioning the Hindu guest's humanity.

In meeting the Hindu visitor, Lucilla ceases, once again, to distinguish between people and other living entities. When her aunt takes offense to Lucilla's reaction to her guest, Lucilla responds by comparing her fear of dark people with her aunt's fear of cats. Lucilla writes:

> I was so irritated by her injustice, that I reminded her of an antipathy of her own, quite as ridiculous as mine—an antipathy to cats. She, who can *see* that cats are harmless, shudders and turns pale, for all that, if a cat is in the same room with her. Set my senseless horror of dark people against her senseless horror of cats—and say which of us has the right to be angry with the other? (118-19; emphasis original)

Although her aunt's fear of cats may well be "ridiculous," such an argument attempts to make a fear of cats and a fear of the racial other analogous when they are not. To do so removes the humanity and genteel class status of the Indian man, who is described in the novel as a converted Christian "gentleman" and is merely participating in the expected polite social customs while an invited guest in someone's home. Although Lucilla bristles at her aunt's "injustice," the novel emphasizes that it is Lucilla who is being unjust in her treatment of the important Indian guest. She dehumanizes the Indian man not only by her supernatural descriptions, but also by her excuses, which fail to distinguish between human and animal. The real crime of the passage is not that Lucilla's fear leads to a somatic reaction and an uncomfortable scene at the dinner table, but that she cannot perceive the difference between a cat and a "Hindoo" (118).

Neither the novel nor her Aunt Batchford countenances Lucilla's behavior towards the Indian guest. When her aunt becomes "furious" over Lucilla's rude reaction, Lucilla, as usual, appeals to her blindness as a justification of her conduct:

> I begged her to make allowances for me. I reminded her that I was blind at a year old, and that I had really no idea of what any person was like . . .

> I appealed to her to remember that, situated as I am, my fancy is peculiarly liable to play me tricks, and that *I* have no sight to see with, and to show me—as other people's eyes show *them*—when they have taken a false view of persons and things. (118; emphasis original)

However, her explanation is "all in vain" and she reports that her aunt "would admit of no excuse for me." Lucilla writes to her father that their quarrel "has hardly left us such good friends as we were before" (118). Aunt Batchford's stand against Lucilla's behavior is the first step in excising of the fear of darkness from Lucilla's consciousness, as well as a model towards a method of excising racial fear from the British social consciousness. Through Aunt Batchford, Collins effectively reconfigures the question of race, illustrating that proper consideration towards the racial other is a matter of basic social decency and good manners. The social stature of the Hindoo and Aunt Batchford's embarrassment at Lucilla's behavior suggests that social codes of polite behavior must be extended to include members of the growing empire.

Because Lucilla does not appear to take to heart her aunt's lesson concerning the proper treatment of others, the novel sets about raising the stakes and consequences for what it views as Lucilla's bad behavior. Collins achieves this goal by associating that which Lucilla loves most, her fiancé, with a dark color as a motivation for Lucilla to overcome her own prejudices. Oscar's previous injuries to the head, sustained during a robbery, eventually lead to the development of recurring epileptic seizures. Unaware of Lucilla's fear of dark colors (because she has hidden it from him), Oscar begins a treatment of silver nitrate to prevent his seizures so that he and Lucilla can move forward

with their wedding. Oscar knows that the medication's side effects include skin "discolouration" (turning his skin a dark blue-black color), but cares only for Lucilla's good opinion, and she, he reasons, will not be able to see his transformation (117). Oscar only learns of Lucilla's prejudice towards dark colors when Reverend Finch shows him the letter from Lucilla describing the quarrel between her and her aunt over the "Hindoo gentleman" as discussed above (118). At this point, Oscar has already begun the course of his treatment, and his skin has transitioned to a "livid ashen colour" on its way to the "deepe[r] . . . black blue" shade that represents the full "saturation" of the medicine (117). Oscar excerpts a portion of Lucilla's letter in his own to Madame Pratolungo (who is temporarily removed to Paris in one of a series of increasingly comical visits to prevent the marriage of her elderly yet "evergreen" father to a young woman of dubious motivations), explaining his decision to hide from Lucilla the change in his complexion from the silver nitrate (102).

In one action, Lucilla has not only injured the feelings of her aunt and her aunt's guest, but has also taken away Oscar's satisfaction with the efficacy of his medicine and his hopeful anticipation of their impending nuptials. Oscar writes to Madame Pratolungo that the "ugly effects" of the silver nitrate do not upset him because "For the last ten days, I have not had a [epileptic] fit. In other words, for the last ten days, I have lived in Paradise. I declare I would have cheerfully lost an arm or a leg to gain the blessed peace of mind, the intoxicating confidence in the future—it is nothing less—that I feel now" (117). Despite these effusions over his newly restored health (on which the setting of the wedding date has depended), Oscar's tone changes when he speaks of her

"strange prejudice" against the Hindu, which he feels presages her reaction to his altered self. He reports that the newly discovered "peculiarity" in Lucilla has "produced a very unpleasant impression on my mind" that "the change in my physical appearance, has now become a matter of far more serious difficulty than I had anticipated" (117). While Oscar and Madame Pratolungo had previously agreed not to tell Lucilla about his treatment until after his transformation because they feared that Lucilla would object to Oscar's sacrifice and would want to spare him the trauma of discoloration, now Oscar begins to suspect that his changing color itself may be an obstacle to their marriage if he becomes an object of fear to Lucilla. Oscar worries that Lucilla will react to him, her blue fiancé, as she did the "brown" "Hindoo" if she should find out about his color change from one of the villagers; he writes to Madame Pratolungo, "Think of her shuddering and starting back from my hand when it took hers! No! No!" (118). Although Madame Pratolungo tries to assure Oscar that Lucilla "will see her stupid prejudice in its true light, when she feels it trying to part her from *you*" (123, emphasis original), Oscar becomes convinced that Lucilla will be afraid of his dark skin and determines to keep his transformation a secret as long as possible.

What follows is three hundred pages of secrets, lies, mistaken identities, and emotional suffering, all of which result from Lucilla's irrational fear and the complications it causes. Because Oscar has no faith in Lucilla's ability to overcome her prejudice, he, in turn, lies to her about his skin color transformation. This creates an opportunity for his twin brother, Nugent, who arrives in Dimchurch from America and falls for the beautiful Lucilla, to attempt to win her away from Oscar. When the secret

of Oscar's discoloration can no longer be kept quiet in the village, the worried Oscar lies again to Lucilla, telling her that it is Nugent who has taken the silver nitrate. Nugent then contrives for his German friend Herr Grosse, an eminent and eccentric "surgeon-optic," to operate on Lucilla's cataracts and restore her sight, creating a necessity for the twin brothers to switch places in order not to disturb Lucilla's delicate nerves during her recovery (193). The result is that Nugent plays suitor to his brother's fiancée without her knowledge (193). Before the end, Oscar has sacrificed his claim to Lucilla's hand, believing that Lucilla would prefer the white brother to the blue one; meanwhile, Nugent, who knows that Lucilla does not prefer him, has plotted to marry her while still pretending to be Oscar.[56] Nugent convinces her to elope with him, and then resorts to imprisoning her in order to prevent the interference of Oscar and Madame Pratolungo while he waits for the marriage license. Although Lucilla and Oscar are reunited and married at the conclusion of the novel, the ordeal has resulted in the loss of both Lucilla's health and her newly restored sight. Over the course of the novel, Lucilla's "dislike of dark colours and dark people" is proven to be anything but harmless (162), both to her and to others.

Madame Pratolungo sets the example for Lucilla and the reader early in the text when she meets with another blue man while visiting her family in Paris and, through him, learns of the permanent skin discoloration caused by the ingestion of silver nitrate. He explains to Madame Pratolungo, "The blue tinge in my complexion is produced by the effect on the blood of Nitrate of Silver—taken internally. It is the only medicine which relieves sufferers like me from an otherwise incurable malady. We have no

alternative but to accept the consequences for the sake of the cure" (105). This scene serves the purpose of introducing the medication and its horrific side effects to the narrator and reader before they learn of Oscar's decision to follow the same course of treatment for his epilepsy. Madame Pratolungo reports that "The man's face, instead of exhibiting any of the usual shades of complexion, was hideously distinguished by a superhuman—I had almost said a devilish—colouring of livid blackish *blue*!" In this manner, the text indulges in the pleasures afforded by the grotesque descriptions of the sensationalist genre, but cleverly assigns the specific passage to the unnamed blue Parisian rather than the blue hero of the story. Most importantly, however, the encounter between Madame Pratolungo and the Parisian man also serves to model the correct manners with which one should treat a person with a "personal deformity" (105).

Madame Pratolungo initially reacts with shock and aesthetic distaste towards the man's "superhuman" skin color. She writes that, at first, "his horrible colour so startled me, that I could not repress a cry of alarm." Madame Pratolungo begins with a similar physical reaction to her blue man as Lucilla upon meeting with the Indian guest and nearly ventures into the same figurative description as Lucilla's narrative, as she "almost" assigns him a "devilish" appearance in describing his blue color just as Lucilla had demonized her brown acquaintance. Nonetheless, unlike Lucilla, Madame Pratolungo quickly recovers and regains her "ease" on receiving the blue man's explanation of his discoloration. She asserts that the man "proved to be a most kind, intelligent, and serviceable person" and that she "got used to his disfigurement in the course of my relations with him" (105). Through Madame Pratolungo's encounter with

the blue Parisian, Collins illustrates that an initial somatic reaction to difference can be overcome by rational reflection and empathy for others. Furthermore, by having Madame Pratolungo regret the "involuntary act of rudeness" that was her reaction to the sudden sight of the blue man (105), Collins implies that not making the effort to overcome one's fear is an act of social indecorum. Just as he had with Aunt Batchford's indignation at Lucilla's impolitic reaction, Collins presents the acceptance of difference as a social duty. Lucilla, it is illustrated to the reader, would do well to follow the example set by Madame Pratolungo in her interaction with people of dark colors.

Although a considerate attitude towards a discoloured white man turned blue is not the equivalent of the acceptance of racial difference, the two are shown to be analogous in Collins's novel. Lucilla's reaction towards her aunt's "Hindoo" guest is mirrored in her reaction to Nugent, when she is misled into believing that it is Nugent who has turned dark blue. In the supposedly blue Nugent's presence, Lucilla also experiences an "irresistible nervous loathing" and the somatic reactions of labored breathing, faintness, and heavy sweating (159). After leaving Nugent, Madame Pratolungo notices Lucilla waving her walking cane about in the air in front of her and inquires as to her actions. Lucilla answers that she is "Clearing the air . . . The air is full of him [the supposedly blue Nugent]. I am in a forest of hovering figures, with faces of black-blue" (160). This "forest of hovering figures" of "black-blue" mirrors the "brown demons" that she imagined "pressing closer and closer" to her at her aunt's dinner party (118). Lucilla's fear does not distinguish between the brown skin of heredity and the blue of chemical discoloration, suggesting the correlation between the two colors as

markers of difference. To her, brown and blue are both censurable for being dark colors, and the difference between their physical or biological manifestations is irrelevant.

Oscar further illustrates this irrelevancy by making the connection between his own discoloration and racial difference. He tells Madame Pratolungo of a medical case related to him by Mr. Sebright, Lucilla's English optical surgeon, in which a little girl, "blind from infancy like Lucilla," regains her sight through an operation. The little girl, the "daughter of an Indian officer," reacts with terror when she sees her "dark Indian nurse" for the first time. The child possesses the same "violent hatred and horror of a dark object" as Lucilla, yet this is only her initial reaction. Mr. Sebright reports that "In a week's time, I found the child sitting in the nurse's lap as composedly as I am sitting in this chair." Oscar finds this story "encouraging," and hopes that with Herr Grosse's successful operation, Lucilla, too, will come to accept his physical difference (226). The story, beyond illustrating the young age at which children learn the cultural connotations of light/dark and other colors, presents the case as that of the rational versus the irrational. The irrationality of metaphorical "blindness" can be overcome when one learns to truly "see." If a child can do it, the text seems to imply, so surely can Lucilla as well.

The task of helping Lucilla overcome her metaphorical and literal blindness is given to Herr Grosse. After the German surgeon operates and is able to restore her vision, he sets about educating Lucilla in the subjects of color and aesthetics. Herr Grosse teaches Lucilla to identify the basic colors by eye and, after seeing the true nature of colors in the world, she learns to balance color's physical properties with its social

meanings, which before had disproportionately dominated her understanding and imagination. When blind, Lucilla had grossly exaggerated the phenomenon of color in her own imagination; for instance, when Herr Grosse arranges objects of various colors about her after her surgery to test her new eyesight, Lucilla is disappointed to witness the true nature of the colors. She says, "I see nothing as bright as my favourite colors here." When shown a white piece of paper, she protests that it is not white enough; her favored view of white was "Fifty thousand times whiter than that!" (299). The same is true of other colors, as Madame Pratolungo reports: "Scarlet was not half as red—black, not one hundredth part as black—as her imagination had figured them to her, in the days when she was blind" (300). If white is not as white as she thought it, black is at least is not as black either. The distance between light and dark begins to collapse for Lucilla, demonstrating not only the silly nature of her fears of dark colors, but also the simplemindedness of elevating light colors beyond their physical meanings. Her fears, it is illustrated, are completely out of proportion with the reality of color, just as the Victorian imagining of racial difference, fueled by ignorance and the sheer distance between England and its empire, is out of proportion with the realities of other peoples in the world. In learning her colors, Lucilla also learns how to meet with the differently colored people of her own empire, illustrating to the reader that a little rationality and education is all that is needed to accept physical difference as nominal, shake hands with people from other lands in polite society, and resume a normal and reasonable daily routine.

To achieve this ideal of rational social interaction, Lucilla must specifically learn the color views of Herr Grosse, who represents the German school of color philosophy as led by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who published his *Die Farbenlehre* (*Theory of Colors*) in 1810, and artist Phillip Otto Runge, whose *Farben-Kugel* (*The Color Sphere*) came out the same year. To Herr Grosse, like the German Romantics, white and black are just two hues out of the great scale of color. Lucilla must learn the entire scale before she can replace her previous fanciful and socially constructed notions of colors with the truth of their physical manifestations. Herr Grosse's lesson not only restores the balance between the objective and subjective meanings of color, but also, in emphasizing white and black as colors rather than shades, replaces the light/dark hierarchy with a more evenly distributed color scale that resists hierarchization. This understanding of color seems most clearly to mirror that Runge, whose color sphere carefully positions "the polarities of light and dark" alongside "the scale of colours in tonal order" (Gage, *Culture* 203). Runge's drawing of the farben-kugel requires many viewpoints to accommodate the geometric shape, but it also has the ability to present all colors relatively democratically; like his contemporary Goethe's color wheel, the hues are divided equally and each is presented in the same spatial relation to the others, effectively avoiding the ranking scale of a vertical hierarchy or the horizontal spectrum of light waves. If Isaac Newton's discovery of the light spectrum unseated the place of white and black, the Romantics' study of color, as illustrated by their scientific protégé Herr Grosse, began the work of returning black and white to their rightful status as colors.

It is only after Lucilla has absorbed Grosse's more balanced understanding of color that she can gaze out at nature in true Romantic fashion and find "no disappointment" (302). The description of Lucilla's first glimpse of the natural world is highly symbolic of her visual awakening; Collins writes that "the clouds were parting; the sun coming out; the bright gaps of blue in the sky were widening every moment." When Lucilla recognizes light and color in its proper place in nature, divested of corrupt social meanings, she can then understand the concept of natural beauty and it exceeds all her expectations. She exclaims, "I have never thought, never dreamed, of anything half so beautiful as this!" (302). The passage replaces her lively and somewhat diseased imaginings, which exaggerate the nature of color in skin and objects, with a heavily aestheticized and moralized brand of nature worship reminiscent of the Pre-Raphaelites and John Ruskin. Like the Pre-Raphaelites, whose motto was "truth to Nature" (Dolin 9), art critic and Brotherhood supporter Ruskin viewed nature as "the palpable voice of divinity" (Parkes 598). To him, the sensory experience of nature, as well as its artistic reproduction, was a highly moral act because he viewed "the natural world…as the foundation of human morality" (599). In Collins and Ruskin's time, aesthetics was capable of connecting the values of art, nature, and morality. In the passages in which Lucilla sets her eyes on the views (and colors) of the South Downs and, later the Ramsgate seaside, only to be overwhelmed "by her own ecstatic sense of the glory of the sky and the beauty of the earth" (W. Collins, *Poor* 302), Collins draws attention to the role of Ruskinian aesthetics in Lucilla's moral improvement.

Color played a vital role in this version of aesthetics, as Ruskin thought that only "pure, vibrant color" could represent "nature in its most animated state" (598). In fact, Ruskin was one of the earliest nineteenth-century art critics to favor color over line, as he "imagined drawing as basically an arrangement of areas of color and tone rather than a manipulation of line" (Bermingham 243). In *The Elements of Drawing*, Ruskin begins the first exercise by stating, "Everything that you see in the world around you presents itself to your eyes only as an arrangement of patches of different colours variously shaded" (XV: 27). Ruskin's aesthetics illustrate the goals of *plein airisme* in favoring the interplay of light and color patches over line and chiaroscuro. Collins's text also emphasizes light and color over physical objects in Lucilla's new aesthetic experiences. When she travels to the seaside resort of Ramsgate, for example, she is enraptured with "all the beauty of land and sea, all the glory of cloud and sunshine" (330). She slowly recovers her health after the surgery through long walks on the cliffs and beaches, where she learns to soak in "the pure light [of the scene], with all those lovely colours" (345). As the following quotation suggests, color is just as vital to the aesthetics of Collins as it is to those of Ruskin, because the novelist uses color to position difference as a question of aesthetics rather than biology.

An appreciation of aesthetics, unlike biology or heredity, derives from education, refinement and personal taste, and therefore is not absolute or immutable. Another of Mr. Sebright's cases, in which a blind man with a scarred wife regains his sight, demonstrates that aesthetics can be learned by anybody. Mr. Sebright relates that when the blind man's sight was restored, the man is at first "absolutely disgusted and terrified

at the sight of her [his wife]," not because she is horribly disfigured, but because her scar did not match "his blind idea" of it. However, "In a few weeks he was able to compare his wife with other women, to look at pictures, to understand what beauty was and what ugliness was—and from that time they have lived together as happy a married couple as in any kingdom" (227). By learning the aesthetic concepts of beauty and ugliness, as well as their relativity, the formerly blind man achieves first acceptance and then domestic happiness. Following a similar course, Lucilla goes from "associating life and beauty with light colours, and death and crime with dark colours" to settling down happily with a dark-skinned man (74). She accomplishes this by dissociating the color's cultural meanings from their physical ones. Although she eventually relapses into blindness by the conclusion of the novel, Lucilla still benefits from the knowledge of color and aesthetics that she gained when she could see, which provides her with a better understanding of people and the world.

It is only after these lessons with Herr Grosse that Lucilla is able to begin reconciling herself to the blue skin of her future husband through her new aesthetic understanding, which she begins to implement soon after her surgery. To recover her health, Lucilla travels to the seaside resort of Ramsgate, where Nugent joins her, having switched places (unbeknownst to Lucilla) with his twin. It is at Ramsgate that the recurring brown and blue colored characters who punctuate the narrative finally converge in the figure of a stranger whom Lucilla spots walking on the beach. The stranger, strolling contentedly with his family, "startle[s]" Lucilla with the same "black-blue complexion" that she had seen and feared on Nugent's (really Oscar's) face on

regaining her sight (339). Although it is clear that the man has taken silver nitrate, what is less clear is the man's hereditary skin color underneath the blue discoloration. Nayder proposes that by "Describing this 'black-blue' gentleman as 'a retired Indian officer' rather than as an Englishman retired from the Indian service, Collins purposely obscures his racial identity" ("Blue" 275). Whether he is read as a white officer who served in India, or a brown Indian as Nayder suggests, the connection is still made between the spaces of empire and external coloration. It is interesting that Lucilla describes the Indian officer as being "black-blue," the same shade referenced in her fearfully imaginings of the "forest of hovering figures, with faces of black-blue" (160). In contrast, when Lucilla sees Oscar for the first time after her surgery (mistaking him for Nugent), his color is portrayed in the reverse as "blue-black" (256). The prioritizing of the black hue over the blue in the case of the Indian officer and Lucilla's fancied mob implies racial otherness more strongly than the previous description of the white hero turned blue. Furthermore, it suggests that Oscar's naturally pale skin creates a white ground that allows the discoloration of the silver nitrate to show bluer, while the emphasis on black over blue in the Indian officer's description proposes something other than whiteness beneath his layer of external coloring. Here Collins's word choice strengthens the connection between racial otherness and blueness that has been suggested throughout the text.

The setting of the scene on the Ramsgate beach further supports the implicit connection between the "black-blue" man and Indian heredity. In the nineteenth century, the seaside resort was a popular vacationing spot in which the different classes

and racial groups of England intermingled in the public space. The highly charged environment of Ramsgate, a former "aristocratic watering place" on the decline at mid-century, was portrayed in the popular genre painting *Ramsgate Sands: 'Life at the Seaside'* by William Powell Frith, a friend of Wilkie and Charles Collins. Frith's wildly popular painting, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1854 and later bought by Queen Victoria for the Royal Collection, illustrates the "uncontrolled" public setting of Ramsgate, where "middle-class family groups at leisure . . . [are] vulnerable to damaging contact with people who do not belong to their social milieu" (Arscott 162). These undesirable elements include the "the black-faced minstrels" and "bothersome hawker" who mix with "the pretty marriageable young ladies" in the crowded setting of almost seventy figures (164). Like *Ramsgate Sands*, *Poor Miss Finch* also depicts the seaside as "a situation which offers threats to social boundaries" (162). Unlike Frith, however, Collins embraces the diverse environment of Ramsgate, using it to expose bourgeois characters to new people and experiences. While the negative and snobbish aspects of Nugent's character are revealed by his objection to "the mixture of low people" creating a "mob on the sands," Lucilla, whose previous isolation has led to her spoiled and headstrong nature, experiences growth in her new, stimulating surroundings (W. Collins, *Poor* 339-40). After her "blind life," Lucilla enjoys the "diversions" provided by the "Monkeys, organs, girls on stilts, a conjurer, and a troop of negro minstrels." In Lucilla's journal description of the activity on the beach, color is particularly emphasized. She describes not only the colorful character of the scene, but also the colorful skins of the characters; for instance, Lucilla's comment that she delights in the

"varied colour and bustling enjoyment of the crowd" comes immediately after she notes the presence of the "negro minstrels." When she witnesses the "black-blue" gentleman, it is ostensibly because her attention was first drawn by the "peculiar colour" of his wife's dress (339). Although Lucilla is "startled" at first by the coloring of the Indian officer, she, like Madame Pratolungo and the child patient before her, quickly regains her composure, finding herself able to "admire the lady's dress, and the beauty of the children, before they had passed" (340). She is able, through her newly acquired vision, to reevaluate the meaning of color, noting the Indian officer's skin color as she does that of his wife's dress, aesthetically, as one of many possible shades on the color spectrum visible in the panorama of beach life. Although the passage itself is heavily marked by racial and class references, it ends by replacing the details of the Indian officer's heredity with aesthetic color.

Though Collins's language somewhat obscures the Indian officer's racial background, it works to emphasize the officer's domestic virtues. An old woman, having witnessed the encounter, tells Lucilla the story of the Indian officer's life. She says,

> "It seems a pity that such a handsome man should be disfigured in that way…But still it don't matter much, after all. There he is, as you see, with a fine woman for a wife, and with two lovely children. . . . and a happier family you couldn't lay your hand on in all England. . . . Even a blue face don't seem such a dreadful misfortune, when you look at it in that light—does it, Miss?" (340)

Whatever the officer's race may be, he has gained the necessary English domestic values to gain the acceptance of the old woman. Here, Collins seems to be suggesting assimilation as a potential answer to fears over the changes to England's racial makeup racial as a result of imperial expansion. In his international story, set in the heart of the English countryside, Collins illustrates that an insular England is no longer possible, but that a combination of assimilation of English domestic values on the part of the alien and a polite consideration towards others on the part of the English could form a happy domestic future. Lucilla, for her part, states that she agrees "entirely" with the old woman's viewpoint on the Indian officer's domestic fortune (340), marking an important turning point in Lucilla's ongoing lessons in the acceptance of difference. The happy family of the Indian officer seems to offer a tantalizing vision of Lucilla's own domestic future with Oscar, if she could only learn to reconcile her fear of color and otherness.

As if inspired by the happy future before her slipping away, Lucilla begins to do just that. Not only does she insist to Nugent that the blue man "has *not* frightened" her, she suggests that they include his blue brother in their household after their marriage (340-41). She states that it was her "own imagination" that frightened her, but that she "soon got over it." The amazed Nugent, who has managed his guilt over his betrayal of his brother by convincing himself that Lucilla could never accept a blue man into her family, asks Lucilla whether she "could have lived quite comfortably with my brother's blue face before you every hour of the day?" She responds, "Quite comfortably—if he would have been my brother too" (341). Here, Lucilla takes the first step towards her

reconciliation with the discolored Oscar and the rejection of the pale Nugent, and the events of climax and dénouement unfold rapidly from this point.

Though Lucilla's vision enables her to overcome her prejudice in this vital scene, she soon begins to think of her ability to see as a curse. Because she thinks Nugent is Oscar, Lucilla cannot understand why her feelings for him seem to have faded, and she attributes the difference to her newly acquired vision. In her unhappiness, her delicate health begins to fade, followed quickly by her eyesight. Simultaneously, Nugent becomes increasingly desperate to keep the truth from her and works to alienate her from her family and Madame Pratolungo, which exacerbates Lucilla's depression. Oscar has long since fled to the continent after ceding his claims to his fiancé so as not to stand in the way of his brother's love for Lucilla. Both Oscar and Madame Pratolungo believe that Nugent is courting Lucilla as himself, but when Madame Pratolungo learns that Nugent is still pretending to be Oscar, she pursues Oscar across Europe. She finds it fairly easy to track a blue man and locates him returning to France from a spell tending the wounded in Italy, where the Italian wars for independence from Austria are being fought. Madame Pratolungo convinces Oscar to return with her to England and confront Nugent. In the meantime, Nugent pressures Lucilla to hasten their marriage and finally persuades her to elope from her aunt's residence. By the time that Oscar, Madame Pratolungo, and Reverend Finch locate Lucilla at the Sydenham residence of one of Nugent's relatives, where she has essentially been kept prisoner while Nugent waits for the wedding license, her health has deteriorated to the point that she has once again gone blind. Lucilla and Oscar are reconciled and marry happily while Nugent, heart-broken

and guilty, joins an arctic expedition and is lost forever in the North Seas.[57] While Lucilla never again regains her eyesight lost as a result of these traumatic events, she easily accepts her return to her former state of blindness. Since it was Lucilla's metaphorical blindness and irrational fears that sparked the conflict, the novel has achieved its goal. The return of her physical blindness is not presented as an obstacle to her future happiness, and, as she settles down into her new family life, Lucilla keeps with her the valuable lessons she has learned about distinguishing the physical meanings of color from the social meanings of color, which can lead to forms of social prejudice.

Although Lucilla begins the novel by claiming, "If I married a man with a dark complexion, . . . I should run away from him" (74), she ends it happily married to a blue man, mother to a brood of "rosy face[d]" children just as beautiful as the Indian officer's (426).[58] Lucilla achieves this fulfillment of English domestic values only after she expands her understanding of the nature of color and learns to separate external appearance from internal worth. By "charting the education of Lucilla" in the meanings of aesthetics, color, and difference (Nayder, "Blue" 274), Collins models for the reader a means to "unlearn" social prejudice.

CHAPTER IV

RED: THOMAS HARDY'S *THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE*

In his novel *The Return of the Native* (1878), Thomas Hardy continues the work of Wilkie Collins's colorful experiments by creating his own colored outsider. Although Hardy did not receive a formal education in the visual arts as Collins did, his lifelong interest in art is represented in the highly pictorial quality of his narratives. As an artist and author, Hardy recognizes color's subversive qualities and exploits them to question the established divisions of Victorian society in his novels. His challenge to Victorian social conventions in *The Return of the Native* is embodied in the form of Diggory Venn, an "isolated and weird character" notable for his "unnatural colour" (327, 71). Diggory is a reddleman, or a man who trades in red ochre pigment, and his colored wares have penetrated his skin and turned his entire body a vibrant hue of red. By examining both the pictorial representation and political implications of Diggory's unusual skin color, I will explore how Hardy's use of color allows the reddleman to function as a disruptive force to both literary and social convention, challenging formal distinctions between literary and artistic expression as well as social divisions between racial and economic groups.

Color has always been the sign of the troublemaker throughout Hardy's body of work, marking those characters that try to resist the oppressive social conventions of the Victorian period. Red clothing decorates Tess Durbeyfield of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891), Lucetta Templeman in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), and Bathsheba

Everdene and Sergeant Troy of *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874). Yet it is *The Return of the Native*'s Diggory Venn, a "red" man positioned at the edges of respectable society, who most successfully rejects established social hierarchies by living a nomadic life that crosses gender roles, defies class divisions, and transgresses racial boundaries. Of all of Hardy's colorful characters, Diggory represents the greatest challenge to social and textual authority, an ability that is denoted by his symbolic red skin.

My exploration of Diggory Venn will be twofold, investigating the employment of color to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the novel as well as the politics inherent in Diggory's social rebellion and racialized difference. Aesthetically, Hardy uses color to incorporate pictorial elements and visual imagery into his textual description, a tendency often referred to as his "word-painting" (Mallett 405), in an attempt to close the gap between art and fiction. Politically, color allows Hardy to question the divisions between social groups within the British social hierarchy. In moving between whiteness and redness, Diggory unhinges other conventional binaries, including those of race, class, and gender, exposing the constructed nature of all social divisions. Although Diggory returns to whiteness at the end of the novel, a shift that also works to fix his gender and class positions, the legacy of his disruption remains. In the conclusion, Hardy illustrates the false comfort provided by the text's belated containment of Diggory's fluidity.

I argue that Hardy's use of color and his contradictory representation of the reddleman, in which the text is both attracted to and apprehensive of his difference, can be most effectively understood through the framework of the relationship between

chromophobia and chromophilia, which Batchelor views as the opposite side of the same coin. He writes, "chromophobia recognizes the otherness of colour but seeks to play it down, while chromophilia recognizes the otherness of color and plays it up" (71). The conflict of Diggory's characterization is representative of the conflict between Hardy's love of the challenge of color and the lessons of his own social acculturation, which have taught him that color is "alien and therefore dangerous" (Batchelor 23). The reddleman, I argue, is a representative of Hardy's own conflicted chromophilia.

The Reddleman

As a reddleman, Diggory Venn's job is to both collect and trade a substance known as reddle. Reddle, or ruddle, is made up of red ochre, a natural clay infused with iron oxide. Because of the strength of the colorant and wide availability of the clay, red ochre has historically been used as a pigment on every continent. According to Robert Chenciner, it has been found in "in the earliest surviving primal-religious art," as well as coloring corpses dating as far back 30,000 BC (29). In Victorian England, red ochre was primarily used for agricultural purposes to mark sheep and chart the reproductive behaviors of the livestock (see fig. A-2). Farmers would smear a mixture of the color and chalk on the chests of their rams; during mating, the color would be transferred to the hindquarters of the ewes, alerting the farmers to the possibility of their impregnation.[59]

The reddlemen who traded the pigment would often turn red themselves, since the iron oxide within the clay can penetrate the surface of skin and clothing, causing

discoloration that lasts for months after the last exposure. Hardy describes the effects of reddle thus: "Reddle spreads its lively hues over everything it lights on, and stamps unmistakably, as with the mark of Cain, any person who has handled it for half an hour" (71). As Hardy's reference to the mark of Cain suggests, this discoloration could easily be aligned discursively with racial difference, relegating the traveling reddleman to an outcast status. Diggory's first introduction in the novel emphasizes the strange and foreign appearance presented by his red coloring. In the second chapter of the novel, entitled "Humanity Appears upon the Scene," minor character Captain Vye is traveling across Egdon Heath, the lonely, wild setting of the story, when he sees on the road

> a spring van [wagon], ordinary in shape, but singular in colour, this being a lurid red. The driver walked beside it; and, like his van, he was completely red. One dye of that tincture covered his clothes, the cap upon his head, his boots, his face, and his hands. He was not temporarily overlaid with the colour: it permeated him. (12)

From the very beginning of the novel, Diggory's red coloring becomes the most vital element of his characterization. It subsumes his identity so that Captain Vye does not recognize Diggory, who is returning home to Egdon after a long absence. His colored skin marks the reddleman as an outsider within the community despite his native status.

Considering his peculiar and highly racialized treatment, surprisingly little critical interest has focused on this enigmatic character. The scanty attention that has been paid to him has resulted in a very mixed critical reading. For example, both Sandy Cohen and John Jewell have noted Diggory's unworldly characterization, but the two

critics arrive at quite opposite conclusions. Cohen makes the argument that "Diggory Venn, for all his redness, is a Christ figure" (52), while Jewell sees him as a "symbol of evil" often "equate[d] with the Devil" (160). This "bifurcation" in criticism on Diggory, in which "one group has discussed his goodness alone, another his resemblance to Satan," dates back at least to the 1960s (Hagan 151), and reflects the text's own ambivalence towards the reddleman, who is both an attractive and threatening figure. The appeal of Diggory in the novel is that, as a liminal figure who lives on the margins of society, he represents a certain freedom from the limitations of the domestic English lifestyle. In the relatively closed community of Egdon, only Diggory has the ability to move freely in and out of the confines of the heath. Indeed, he is the only character to leave the heath throughout the duration of the novel (Eustacia and Wildeve, for instance, die in their attempt to escape the heath), with his absences taking him outside of the narrator's purview for long stretches of time. Although Hardy identifies the reddleman (along with his love Thomasin) as the third out of six characters in "order of importance" (qtd. in Mallett 378), Diggory often moves on the fringes of the main plot. Yet, paradoxically, he also plays a "pivotal role" in the framing of the novel (Hagan 147). He is the first of the main characters introduced and serves as the impetus for several of the romantic complications of the novel, with his actions "chang[ing] the course of the major characters' lives" (149). Likewise, he helps to conclude the novel's romantic plotlines in the last chapter, as his marriage to Thomasin lightens the somber tone after the tragic deaths of Mrs. Yeobright, Eustacia, and Wildeve.

While the text seems to rely on Diggory for its organization, he is also portrayed as a disorderly character that cannot be controlled and is represented as a "sinister" force on the heath (*Return* 129). Having been rejected by Thomasin Yeobright for the professional man Wildeve, Diggory acts out his disappointment and alienation through the adoption of the lower class occupation of reddleman. Yet despite his rebellion, he cannot avoid haunting the environs of his former love or becoming entangled in the intricate affairs of Thomasin and those around her. Diggory spies on Wildeve's interactions with tragic heroine Eustacia, gambles with him for Thomasin's money, and even threatens him with a gun when Wildeve continues to meet with Eustacia after his marriage to Thomasin. In his tireless promotion of Thomasin's happiness, Diggory represents loyalty and selflessness in love; however, he also steps beyond the bounds of acceptable behavior in his intimidation of Wildeve. As Pamela Dalziel suggests, there are two versions of Diggory Venn to be found within the novel: the good Diggory who is the "embodiment of selfless love, [as] Thomasin's devoted guide and protector" and "the 'other' Venn of Hardy's text, the luridly colored reddleman who haunts the heath" (108-9). At best, the contradictory Diggory is presented as a sort of dark hero, at once admirable and intimidating.

Art

Diggory's red skin allows Hardy to indulge in significant linguistic and visual play in the novel's descriptive passages, a play that is associated with the subversive joys of chromophilia that Batchelor identifies (66). Hardy's significant artistic background

enables him to include artistic and pictorial elements meant to bring aesthetic interest to the text. Several of his most creative passages make use of the possibilities of Diggory's striking exterior coloring to create dramatic imagery. The author uses several artistic techniques to create this imagery, including Impressionist coloring effects such as the color patch, the tradition of the grotesque in the visual arts, and the lexicon of painterly colors. Together these elements help Hardy to integrate aesthetic color and the pictorial into his text and challenge the formal division between the media of painting and literature in the nineteenth century.

In order to investigate the possible meanings of the red Diggory Venn in *The Return of the Native*, it is necessary to establish the important role that art and color play in Hardy's life and works. Although the author's inclusion of Victorian science in his writings has been well established by critics, less has been written about his background as an architect and artist. Hardy was always very interested in the visual arts and made a "lifelong habit of drawing and sketching out of doors" (Bullen 13). In his youth, he had "thought of becoming an art critic" (Yeazell, "Hardy's Rural Painting" 139), and as an adult, he continued to visit both museums and independent galleries in England and abroad throughout his writing career. In the 1860s, while he was in London training to be an architect, Hardy supplemented his education by studying art in his free time. Every day, he would make a quick outing to the National Gallery, studying one "single master on each visit" and keeping records of his observations in a "'Schools of Painting' notebook" (138). When Hardy turned to writing in the late 1860s, he first envisioned his fictional works through the visual arts, explaining that his "literary ideas often presented

themselves to him first in the guise of pictures—a number of which he himself sketched and painted" (138). In his later career, Hardy even illustrated his own work, providing thirty original sketches for the publication of *Wessex Poems and Other Verses* in 1898. Although he was most skilled in sketching as a trained draftsman, Hardy also painted in watercolors, a medium whose influence is visible in his fiction's preoccupation with the visual effects of light and color. His vibrant paintings, to be discussed in more detail below, demonstrate his technical knowledge of color theory, as well as his interest in the experimental artistic movements of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Hardy's own artistic and literary experiments with color reflect the acceptance of color in Western European art as artists began reconsidering the value of coloring as a skill in the second half of the nineteenth century. This change in European art reflected not only the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites, discussed in the previous chapter, but also that of British artist J. M. W. Turner and the early French Impressionists. The Romantic Turner, prominent in the first half of the nineteenth century and one of Hardy's favorite artists, was known as the painter of "light and colour" due to his attempts to render the aerial effects of atmosphere on canvas (Bockemühl 93). Because of the revolutionary nature of his coloring, Turner often "attracted abuse and mockery for the extreme freedom with which he rendered effects of light and color" (Mallett 389). His late work was especially characterized by the experimental use of bright colors and light effects that sometimes overwhelmed the subject matter of the paintings. *The Fighting Temeraire* (1839), for instance, features a brilliant red sunset that dominates the depiction of the celebrated gunship of the Napoleonic Wars. Later in the century, the

Impressionists, to whom "the English painter [Turner] was something of a hero" (Gage, *Meaning* 164),[60] followed in his footsteps by painting *en plein air.* *Plein airisme* emphasized the importance of coloring, as Impressionist painters used "visible, bright *taches* [patches] of colour . . . to evoke the brilliance of atmospheric effects outdoors" (Callen 153). Just as critics and viewers initially disapproved of Turner's brilliant paintings, so too did they object to the Impressionists' unbridled use of color, citing a "harshness in the juxtaposition of tints, a crudeness of local colouring" as reasons for their disapproval (Flint 3).[61] Although they certainly met with popular resistance, artists such as Turner and the Impressionists did manage to break away from the historical prejudices that favored form over color and helped to achieve a reassessment of the overall status of color in the visual arts.

The artist in Hardy must have followed these developments with delight. His own watercolors illustrate his familiarity with the various painting trends of his day (including the pastoral, Japonisme, and Impressionism), [62] as well as his comfort in using the colorful palette of watercolor painting. The surviving collection of his paintings, housed at the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester, consists primarily of landscapes and the occasional seascape of rural Dorset. The landscapes mostly depict the fields and woods and are often punctuated by carefully depicted medieval churches or classical-style manors that allowed Hardy to make use of his draftsman skills (see fig. A-3). They sometimes feature people or domestic animals such as cattle or horses, but these rare figures are often kept small and lack individuation both in keeping with the landscape tradition and Hardy's own obviously limited skill in figure painting. Overall, the

paintings are dominated by natural colors, particularly the soft, lush greens and deeper olives of the abundant Dorset vegetation that frames the majority of his compositions. While Hardy does not appear to mimic the brilliant colors of Turner's dramatic sunsets, he does pay attention to the shade and light of the northern sky in the manner of the Impressionists, rendering his skies as a constantly shifting amalgamation of white cloud and pale blue atmosphere.

Yet Hardy's occasional forays into experimenting with new styles also demonstrate his willingness to make use of more dramatic coloring, as well as his knowledge of color theory and technique. His early painting of his childhood home, *Bockhampton: The Hardy House and the Heath* (see fig. A-4), includes a careful stippling of small *taches* of complementary colors in a manner reminiscent of the Divisionism (Pointillism) techniques of the Neo-Impressionists Georges Seurat and Camille Pissarro. Hardy's use of these techniques illustrates his familiarity with complementary colors and the law of simultaneous contrast as developed by the French scientist Michel Eugène Chevreul. Many popular art manuals such as Charles Blanc's *Grammar of Painting* (1861) translated Chevreul's scientific discussions into specific coloring laws for painters to follow. In these systems, as summarized by French art critic Félix Fénéon, "local color," or the true color of an object or natural element, would "dominate" the painting, so that green grass would still appear primarily green (Sutter 28). However, light falling on that grass would be illustrated not by black and white shading, but through coloring. For instance, direct sunlight would be imitated through a "dosage of yellow-orange, conceived of as the proper expression in pigment of the sun's

actions" (29). This effect can be seen in Hardy's *Bockhampton* in the tree's leaves, as well as in the depiction of the grass, where the sun's highlights are signaled through yellow and orange stippling. Furthermore, according to Fénéon, shadows and darkness were to be indicated by "blue . . . as the pervasive colour of indirect light" and supplemented by reds and purples (29). Hardy's application of blue, red, and purple to indicate shade is clearly visible in the grass and shrubbery that lies in the shade of the house's fence, as well as the shadowy sides of the trees. This experimental work of Hardy's demonstrates that he was on the cutting edge of painterly techniques and color theory of his time, despite his amateur status.

Another example, Hardy's *Imaginary Scene with Bay and Oak Tree* (see fig. A-5), is reminiscent of the saturated, flat coloring of the trend of Japonism (*Japonisme* in French). In the 1850s and '60s, Japanese woodblock prints became more widely available in Western Europe and inspired many artists of the Impressionist and Arts and Crafts movements, as well as the later Art Nouveau and Cubism. These prints suggested fresh and innovative ways for the Europeans to approach their art, as the Japanese emphasized flatness over Western distinctions of depth, employed solid or flat color planes with little of the shading popular in Europe, and experimented with asymmetrical compositions and aerial perspectives that were uncommon in Occidental works. In Hardy's painting, we can see his attempt to incorporate some of these new developments in art and coloring. The trees, in particular, exhibit a stylized, Japonism shape and form, which is emphasized in the composition by the flattened perspective. However, the most

dramatic aspect of the painting is Hardy's clear, confident coloring, which illustrates his willingness to experiment with solid planes of color in his artwork.

It is clear that Hardy's love of the visual arts extends beyond his painting to his writing, which is marked throughout by a "widespread pictorialism" (Bullen 10). In his fiction, Hardy consciously attempts to combine his two creative interests by using ideas borrowed from the visual arts as rhetorical devices to express moods or ideas within his narrative. As a landscape artist, Hardy makes a discernible effort to include imagery and pictorial description in his writing, a tendency that was noted by his contemporary critics and referred to as his "word-painting" (Mallett 405). Although Hardy disliked the term, he admitted, "I endeavor . . . to give an impression of a scene as it strikes me" (Bullen 3). Twenty-first-century critic Yeazell has described this artistic description as "self-conscious . . . picture making" due to Hardy's use of ekphrasis to set a scene ("Hardy's Rural Painting" 140). For example, in depicting a female face in *Far From the Madding Crowd*, Hardy compares it in style and beauty to those countenances that "we meet with in a Terburg or a Gerard Douw" (60), referencing two painters of the Dutch Golden Age. Hardy's integration of art into his novels extends beyond scenic description and artistic allusion, however, and shapes the very ways in which he understands his own writing.

It is clear from Hardy's journals, published posthumously as his *Life and Work,* that the author turned to the visual arts as a means to theorize genre and style in his poetry and fiction. Despite his reputation as one of the quintessential realist authors of the Victorian era, Hardy often resisted the strict tenets of realism, and he articulated this opposition, at least in his private writing, through a theoretical discussion of painting.

Turner's body of work, in particular, was instrumental in Hardy's wrangling with the nature of realism as an artistic and literary movement. Just as Turner "gradual[ly] abandon[ed] realistic depiction" and the history genre to render effects of light and color (Bockemühl 84), so did Hardy also move away from the realist position taken in his early works like *Under the Greenwood Tree*, whose subtitle "A Rural Painting of the Dutch School" acknowledged the influence of Dutch realist painting on Hardy's novel. In his later career, Hardy developed a belief that art required moving beyond realistic depiction to reach what he called a "deeper reality underlying the scenic" (*Life* 192). He wrote in his *Life and Work*, "The 'simply natural' is interesting no longer. The much decried, mad, late-Turner rendering is now necessary to create my interest. The exact truth as to material fact ceases to be of importance in art—it is a student's style" (192). The same journals show how the author admired the way in which Turner's watercolors filtered the reproduction of natural phenomenon through the artist's subjectivity; Hardy claimed, "each [of Turner's paintings] is a landscape *plus* a man's soul" (224, emphasis original). Several of Hardy's interrogations of realistic depiction, whether artistic and literary, include a discussion of Turner, suggesting that the artist heavily influenced Hardy's views on realism.

Hardy also drew on historical artists for inspiration in his writing, including several artists of the Venetian school of the Italian Renaissance, who favored color over their rival Florentine artists' preference for line and shading. He writes that the purpose of his own "art is to intensify the expression of things, as is done by [painters] Crivelli, Bellini, &c. so that the heart and inner meaning is made vividly visible" (183). The

works of Carlo Crivelli and Giovanni Bellini, which Hardy would have seen at the National Gallery in London (Bullen 15), are characterized by the highly saturated palette of the Venetian school (Gage, *Culture* 137). According to Bullen, Hardy believed that artists like "Crivelli and Bellini in the Venetian Renaissance, and Turner in the modern period, endowed the objective world with imaginative meaning by altering and changing appearances to suit their own purposes" (15). These artists eschewed straight mimesis and instead regarded imagination as an indispensible element in creating art. It is imagination, which Hardy came to view as crucial to his own writing, that allows him to progress beyond the strict realism that characterizes his earliest work.

The influence of Turner and the Venetian artists on Hardy also highlights the important role that color played in shaping Hardy's vision of the novel. His preference for artists that he felt succeeded in moving past "the simply natural" of realistic depiction and accomplishing the goal of "abstract imaginings" may have led him to associate the ideals of artistic meaning with their colorful and emotional styles (*Life* 192). The ongoing reconsideration of the status of color in nineteenth-century art, along with Hardy's own artistic preferences and sensibilities, may have suggested to the author a connection between color and imagination. In his fiction, Hardy imagines his characters' souls in the context of color; in *The Return of the Native*, for instance, the narrator states, "Assuming that the souls of men and women were visible essences, you could fancy the colour of Eustacia's soul to be flame-like" (61). Color allows Hardy to make characters' thoughts or souls into "visible essences" by expressing the intangible as visual elements.

It comes as no surprise then that one of Hardy's most imaginative characters, Diggory Venn, is the one who is color made manifest. It may have been the combined influence of color and imagination that prompted Hardy to shift Diggory's occupation from that of a haulier in the earlier drafts of the novel to a reddleman (Gatrell 356), a change that allowed Diggory to carry the artistic phenomenon of color on the surface of his body. The mysterious and wayward Diggory, who is associated with the supernatural as well as with intense emotion, challenges the literary rules of realism both through his imaginative skin color and his treatment as a visual effect. This creativity fostered by Diggory's unusual color and its pictorial representation could perhaps be best defined as the literary equivalent to what Hardy called painting's "abstract imaginings" (192).

Hardy was clearly drawn to the striking imagery that an entirely red being could provide for his text. Red, so prominent in the paintings of Hardy's favorites Turner and the Venetians, is a color that carries much resonance for Hardy, as evidenced by its inclusion throughout his *oeuvre*, decorating characters and landscape alike. In *Far from the Madding Crowd*, published four years before *The Return of the Native*, Hardy plays with the pictorial possibilities of Sergeant Troy's signature military jacket, which is a vibrant shade of red. In one scene, Troy appears as a patch of color on the landscape, drawing Bathsheba's eyes from afar to "a bright scarlet spot" emerging "From behind the wagon" (*Far* 133). In the moment before Bathsheba recognizes that the dot "was the gallant sergeant, who had come haymaking" (113), color replaces Troy: he appears to be simply a *tache* of paint in a landscape painting. Another completely red entity appears

in the novel in the form of Bathsheba's cow, whose coloring is described at length as a solid, blanket sheet of unwavering color. The text states, "The cow standing erect was of the Devon breed, and was encased in a tight warm hide of rich Indian red, as absolutely uniform from eyes to tail as if the animal had been dipped in a dye of that colour, her long back being mathematically level" (16). This description of the cow is particularly painterly, with the unwavering "uniform" color of the cow echoing the flat patches of color devised by the Impressionist Èdouard Manet and imitated by some of Hardy's own watercolors. The subject matter and composition of the image recalls an older tradition of British pastoral landscapes as well as animal portraiture, such as the portraits of hounds and horses made popular by artist George Stubbs in the eighteenth century. The example of the cow's "Indian red," or chestnut, coloring prefigures the later unvarying and saturated red appearance of Diggory Venn, who is depicted as "overlaid with the colour" of his reddle pigment (*Return* 12). Indian red, though browner in tone than reddle, shares the same mineral properties as both pigments are derived from iron oxide. The similarities in both the coloring and material illustrates that the passing description of a flatly-colored Devon cow in *Far from the Madding Crowd* is just the first of the recurring red images that culminates in the remarkable treatment of the red Diggory Venn.

As Hardy experiments with the visual power of red, he makes a concerted effort to distinguish between shades of red in his use of the lexicon of artist's pigments. Although Diggory, Eustacia, and Thomasin are all associated with red, each is characterized by a different shade. The hues of scarlet and crimson are used primarily to

sexualize the women of the novel. For example, Thomasin is introduced in the novel in a description that emphasizes "the scarlet of her lips" (37), while fiery Eustacia is associated with both "scarlet" (82, 159) and "crimson" (226, 237). Diggory, on the other hand, is treated differently, as he is continually characterized as "vermilion" (69, 72, 134). Hardy reserves this color term solely for descriptions of Diggory Venn or the traces of pigment he leaves on the objects that he handles; vermilion is not applied to any other character or description throughout the novel.

Vermilion pigment, the color used to depict the setting sun in Turner's *The Fighting Temeraire* ("Art in the Making: *Fighting*" 1), derives from the mineral cinnabar. It is a red shade that borders on orange, a detail that changes the color's emotional and social connotations. Hardy was clearly familiar with vermilion's association with orange, as well as its use by Turner; in his early novel *A Pair of Blue Eyes* (1873), Hardy depicts the "spectacle" of a busy London alleyway thus: "Gaslights glared from butchers' stall, illuminating the lumps of flesh to splotches of orange and vermilion, like the wild colouring of Turner's later pictures" (108). Turner himself may have based his understanding of the colors and their emotional connotations on the work of Romantic philosopher and color theorist Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whose work the artist studied extensively; Turner even referenced Goethe's work in the title of his painting *Light and Colour (Goethe's Theory)*.[63] Goethe associated orange with "warmth and gladness" (258), an emotional correlation that still exists today.[64] Interestingly, Goethe also depicted orange, and specifically cinnabar, as a masculine shade, full of activity and energy; he writes in his *Theory of Colors*, "it is not to be wondered at that

impetuous, robust, uneducated men, should be especially pleased with this colour" (258). Goethe's discussion of orange as appealing to unchecked masculine energy may help to explain why Hardy associated Diggory with the orange-red of vermilion, while restricting the female characters to other shades of red.[65]

The use of the term vermilion not only suggests Diggory's masculine vigor, but also brings an exoticism to Diggory's characterization. The mineral cinnabar has been mined in China since antiquity for making Chinese lacquer; therefore, the color was also commonly known in Europe by the name "China Red." Diggory's close association with this foreign pigment emphasizes his status as an outsider in the Egdon community. Vermilion is also associated with the pagan rites of the Roman Empire, which imported the Chinese mineral and used it artwork, particularly in depictions of the god Jupiter. In Roman victory celebrations, vermilion would be used to paint the faces of triumphant generals in imitation of the mighty Jupiter. Perhaps because of this historical association with pagan mythology and warfare, Goethe depicted vermilion as a color that appealed to the so-called uncivilized races and to children (who were also commonly understood as uncivilized), writing that "Among savage nations the inclination for it [the color] has been universally remarked, and when children, left to themselves, begin to use tints, they never spare vermilion" (258). Diggory's colored skin, which recalls the face painting of pagan ceremonies as well as exotic Chinese pigments and pottery, is meant to accentuate his resistance to civilizing forces and his foreign appearance.

Critical discussion of the reddleman in *The Return of the Native* has yet to take into account Hardy's artistic sensitivity to shades of color or his careful use of the

painter's lexicon. In the most extensive discussion of Diggory's coloring currently available, John Jewell addresses the symbolism of his redness in a three-page note in the *Explicator*. Because the color red has been generally understood to indicate sexual passion in Hardy's canon of work, as established by Tony Tanner in his article on *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Jewell tries to extend Tanner's basic argument to *The Return of the Native*: Jewell claims that Diggory's red "signals for Hardy's readers the presence of illicit love and passion" (160). However, this reading is only possible if one considers Diggory's love of Thomasin to be illicit, ignoring the novel's presentation of his love as an unwavering and loyal devotion that results in the plot's only successful marriage. Furthermore, in order to address the appearance of red as passion elsewhere in the novel, Jewell must make a logical leap to claim that "Venn and his red stamp traverse Egdon Heath and mysteriously show up wherever illicit love is present," particularly in reference to Wildeve and Eustacia as "secret lovers" (161). Although it is true that "Venn and his red stamp" do "traverse Egdon Heath" because Diggory leaves traces of pigment wherever he camps, it is clear that not all references to red in the novel are used in the same manner. Jewell's reading, in collapsing Hardy's careful coloring into a homogenous discussion of red as symbolic of passion, ignores the artistic enjoyment of color and the trained sensitivity to shade expressed in Hardy's painterly lexicon. In reading Hardy, then, it becomes important to look beyond the basic color terms (a phrase coined by linguists Brent Berlin and Paul Kay to reference the eleven rudimentary color terms of English),[66] and instead notice Hardy's complex differentiations of color shades and meanings. By paying as much attention to color terminology as Hardy does, we can

see that Diggory's orange-red color is clearly differentiated in shade and connotation from the more sexualized and feminine hues of scarlet and crimson. The reddleman's coloring is not the symbol of his passion because it is red, but the symbol of Venn's pagan and oriental otherness because it is vermilion. It is part of a complex lexical system that depends on an artistic dedication and sensitivity to color.

Along with his lexicon of painter's colors, Hardy also incorporates the literary representation of painterly techniques to create striking and colorful imagery in his fiction. The author seems to delight in the literary play that the reddleman's color provides, in part because it allows him to bring the visual effects of nineteenth-century paintings into his novel. One of Hardy's favorite adjectives for describing Diggory's coloring is "lurid," which means "Shining with a red glow or glare amid darkness (said, e.g., of lightning-flashes across dark clouds, or flame mingled with smoke)" (*OED*, def. 2). Nineteenth-century artists often endeavored to produce such light effects in their paintings; Turner, in particular, is famous for reproducing these effects through either the glow of the setting sun, as seen in *The Fighting Temeraire*, or through the presence of fire in paintings such as *The Burning of the Houses of Parliament* (1835) and *Fire at Sea* (1835). After Turner, the early Impressionists, whose first shows in London took place only a few years before the composition of *The Return of the Native*, also made studies of similar color, light, and atmospheric effects. Descriptions of the figure of the "lurid" reddleman allow Hardy to participate in this artistic endeavor, incorporating his own artistic values into the novel.

Hardy uses the adjective "lurid" five times throughout the text: three times to describe Diggory's appearance and twice to illustrate natural light effects. Of the two uses of "lurid" as a light effect, one is a description of the "lurid glare" of a "red-hot" fire (103), while the second can be read as an indirect reference to the character of the reddleman. Chapter Two of Book Five is entitled, "A Lurid Light Breaks in upon a Darkened Understanding" (261), with the light representative of Clym's realization concerning Eustacia's partial responsibility for his mother's death. The use of "lurid" also refers to the means through which Clym comes to this realization; in the chapter, Diggory visits Blooms-End and informs Clym that his mother had forgiven him for his marriage to Eustacia and was planning to visit Clym and Eustacia "on purpose to make friends" on the day of her death (265). This information sparks Clym to investigate Eustacia's role in the events of his mother's death and leads to the disintegration of their marriage.

The other three uses of "lurid" in *The Return of the Native* directly reference Diggory's coloring. The term is introduced at the same moment as the reddleman: the narrator describes his van, just appearing on the heath road, as "singular in colour, this being a lurid red. The driver [Diggory] walked beside it; and, like his van, he was completely red" (12). From this point, the adjective "lurid" is used to announce Diggory's appearances in the text; this fact is illustrated when Eustacia spots a "sinister redness arising from a ravine a little way in advance—dull and lurid like a flame in sunlight, and she guessed it to signify Diggory Venn" (129). The imagery of the "flame in sunset," painterly in its effect, also brings together the two types of lurid references,

that of Diggory's color and that of a light effect, to suggest the reddleman's appearance is closer to a visual effect than a material presence.[67] The use of the word "signify" is significant, as lurid red both signifies and embodies, by means of metonymy, the person of the reddleman. By the last chapters of the text, both the characters and the readers have learned to identify Diggory merely from a reference to his "luridness," which is used as a synonym for his "redness" (87). When Thomasin is lost with her baby on the heath during a stormy night in the novel's climax, for example, she hears "a footstep advancing from the darkness behind her; and turning, beheld the well-known form in corduroy, lurid from head to foot" and realizes that Diggory has found her (302). The narrator then uses the pronoun "he" without specifiying the unknown person approaching to be Diggory, knowing that Thomasin and reader alike need no further confirmation of the man's identity than a dropping of the word "lurid" (302). In this case, "lurid," ostensibly used as a descriptor of the luminescence of his color, becomes a metonym for Diggory himself.

The red metonym of Diggory's character is not strictly a literary configuration, but also a particularly artistic one that derives from the painter's experience of material color. Linguist Alene V. Anishchanka has studied how artists and art critics use color terminology and has found that they often have "alternative ways of conceptualizing color" as a "virtual entity," which she attributes to the artist's interaction with pigments on a palette, divorced from their perceptual referents in the visual world (390). Anishchanka differentiates between the "perceptual" and "pictorial" conceptualizations of color. In the perceptual form, color is the "natural and common mode of seeing and

understanding color as *color of something*, namely a property of a substance" while "pictorial conceptualization is inherent in picture making, where color is conceived as itself, independent of the carrying substance" (emphasis original; 381). She argues that the pictorial conceptualization "liberate[s] color from its descriptive function" and "substantivizes" color as a "self-sufficient entity, independent of the carrier" (381-6). Linguistically speaking, this alternative way of understanding color can be recognized in the shift from the color term as an adjective that describes the color of something to the color term as a noun representing color as its own entity.

In *The Return of the Native*, the artist Hardy makes use of a pictorial conceptualization of color, in which redness replaces the material being of Diggory at points in the narrative. Similar to Hardy's use of "lurid" as first an adjective and then a metonym for the character, red also moves from an adjective describing Diggory to a noun in its own right: Diggory refers to Mrs. Yeobright not "lik[ing] my redness" (87), using the possessive pronoun "my" to emphasize the structuring of "redness" as a noun. Although Diggory views his redness as a characteristic that he possesses, other characters such as Thomasin and Eustacia regard his redness as an all-encompassing feature that stands in for his person. For example, in Eustacia's vision of Diggory as a "sinister redness arising from a ravine a little way in advance" (129), Diggory resembles an indistinct *tache* of color on the horizon of an Impressionist landscape, much like the earlier image of Sergeant Troy approaching from afar in his scarlet jacket in *Far from the Madding Crowd.* The "sinister redness" is divorced from the perceptual carrier of the color in Diggory and instead represented as material color in the manner of the color

patch. Late nineteenth-century artists such as Manet and Whistler promoted the formal qualities of coloring, highlighting the texture and materiality of the paint, as well as the aesthetic play of its light and tonal values, rather than the painting's narrative or symbolic meaning. In these new aesthetic movements, brushstrokes and color patches were meant to stand by themselves, as "art for art's sake." Hardy, in integrating the visual effect of the color patch, temporarily suspends his narrative's symbolic economy in favor of color, which is presented in the description not as an element of a person, but as an entity unto itself.

As the novel progresses, Diggory's redness becomes so "substantivized" as to occur independent of the character (Anishchanka 386), appearing, for instance, in the colored traces of his presence left after the reddleman himself "vanishe[s] entirely" from the heath (*Return* 142). The narrator remarks, "The nook where his van had been standing was as vacant as ever the next morning, and scarcely a sign remained to show that he had been there, excepting a few straws, and a little redness on the turf" (142). Similar images abound in the text as Hardy seems to delight in tracking the visual traces of Diggory's presence, from the red tinges left on the string tying together the trap Diggory devises for Wildeve to prevent his nocturnal visits to Eustacia to the stunning image of the "single object protrud[ing]" from the darkened niche of The Quiet Woman Inn's hearth: a clay pipe of a "reddish color" (190). The pipe is used to announce the previously invisible presence of Diggory, who has been eavesdropping on the conversation, his arrival in the vicinity of the heath having gone unnoticed by the inn's patrons, narrator, and reader alike. The result is an image in the mind of the reader that

replaces the character of Diggory with a patch of color, a "redness," that has been animated into its own entity.

The visual effects of Diggory's coloring also allow Hardy to bring another artistic element to his novel: the grotesque. As has been well established by critics,[68] *The Return of the Native* is characterized by the grotesque, particularly in its depiction of the heath environment. For example, Nicola Harris discusses Hardy's "horrific nightmare" landscape in relation to "his inclination toward the extraordinary and uncommon" and resistance to the insufficiency of the "simply natural" posited by realism (24). Yet critics have yet to consider the contribution that the reddleman makes to this use of the grotesque in the novel. Hardy's experiments in color are tied directly to his work with the grotesque, as both provide an aesthetic challenge to the tedium of overly realistic description. It is no coincidence that the famed Victorian art critic and Turner defender John Ruskin claimed the grotesque was produced when "The mind, under certain phases of excitement, *plays* with *terror*" in *The Stones of Venice* (XI: 166). Color seems to be tied to this play, as Ruskin states elsewhere in *Modern Painters*, "for some conditions of the playful grotesque, the abstract colour is a much more delightful element of expression than the abstract light and shade" (V: 139). Hardy, who is fully conversant with Ruskin's writings (see Hardy's *Life* 179, 201, 381), plays with the possibilities of the grotesque just as he plays with the possibilities of color.

The appeal of the grotesque vision is illustrated in *The Return of the Native* by the textual description of the heathfolk's bonfire in one of the first scenes of the novel. The narrator portrays the monstrous appearance of the rustics' weathered faces in the

flickering firelight ekphrastically as "drawn with Dureresque vigour and dash" (18). Albrecht Dürer, a German painter of the Renaissance and friend of Hardy's favorite Bellini, is particularly associated with the grotesque tradition in the visual arts. Hardy imitates this painterly grotesque in his depiction of the optical effects caused by the motion of the flames. The text states, "All was unstable . . . Shadowy eyesockets, deep as those of a death's head, suddenly turned into pits of lustre: a lantern-jaw was cavernous, then it was shining; wrinkles were emphasized to ravines, or obliterated entirely by a changed ray" (19). Hardy concludes, "Those whom Nature had depicted as merely quaint become grotesque, the grotesque became preternatural" (19).

Most discussions of the grotesque in this scene end with this passage, but a consideration of color's relation to Ruskin's "play of terror" allows us to read on and note how the ominous mood is further intensified by Diggory's arrival at the bonfire. When Diggory stops his van to ask the heathfolk for directions, his approach in the darkness frightens the very characters whom the text had previously termed "preternatural" (19). In response to the men's alarm, Diggory lights a piece of furze to illuminate his face. He means to eliminate their fear, but the chiaroscuro effect of the firelight is amplified by Diggory's being "red from top to toe" (31). The reader is left to imagine the appearance of this combination of terrors from the heathfolk's shocked reactions. Fairway exclaims, "What a turn it did give me when I saw him! . . . Lord's sake, I thought, whatever fiery mommet is this come to trouble us?" Christian Cantle responds, "If he had a handkerchief over his head he'd look for all the world like the Devil in the picture of the Temptation" (32). The heathfolk take Diggory for a "red"

ghost that has been rumored to be on the heath, but it is clear to the reader that this rumor stems from a sighting of the newly-returned reddleman. As Fairway states "I think it was ghostly enough . . . Yes, most ghosts be white; but this is as if it had been dripped in blood" (27). Fairway's description of a bloody ghost lends an additional power to the creepily delightful imagery of the scene. Diggory's appearance furthers the black and white nature of the heathfolk's description by adding the additional element of color to the grotesque.

The most grotesque description of Diggory's appearance occurs in a scene set later that evening, in which the small child Johnny Nunsuch stumbles across Diggory's wagon while crossing the heath at night. Like the bonfire scene, this passage begins with the interplay of light and darkness before progressing to the colorful terrors afforded by the reddleman. Johnny is walking home from tending Eustacia's bonfire when out of the darkness "shone a light, [from] whence proceeded a cloud of floating dust" (67). Though the light is later revealed to be Diggory's lantern obscured through the dust caused by his "beating out some bags" (70), it frightens the boy and provides a wonderfully otherworldly setting for the scene that follows. Whereas Hardy had denied the reader the grotesque description of Diggory's face in the bonfire scene, here he indulges the reader in a graphic vision as seen through the eyes of Johnny, who peeks cautiously through the wagon's open door:

> The picture [inside] alarmed the boy. By a little stove inside the van sat a figure red from head to heels . . . he [Diggory] lifted the lantern to his face, and the light shone into the whites of his eyes and upon his ivory

> teeth, which in contrast with the red surrounding, lent him a startling aspect enough to the gaze of a juvenile. The boy knew too well for his peace of mind upon whose lair he had lighted (68).

This vividly grotesque depiction resembles the bonfire passage in its emphasis on the play of light over the eye sockets, but is intensified by the disparity between Diggory's ominous red face and his gleaming white features. It is enough to frighten Johnny, because, as the narrator explains, "A child's first sight of a reddleman was an epoch in his life. That blood-coloured figure was a sublimation of all the horrid dreams which had afflicted the juvenile spirit since imagination began" (70). Here, Hardy indulges in the joys of the juvenile spirit himself, playing up the uncanny aspects of Diggory's red appearance for the delight of the reading audience.

As is illustrated by these two early scenes, the grotesque depictions of Diggory as frightening or otherworldly are often presented through the eyes of the superstitious heathfolk. Doing so allows Hardy to indulge in the grotesque and add the interest he claims is missing from the "simply natural" without grossly violating the novel's realistic setting (*Life* 192). The grotesque treatment of Diggory then works at two levels, that of reality and that of the heathfolk's fearful impressions, with the first providing a rational explanation for events and the second providing lively description and aesthetic interest. Just as the light that frightens Johnny is revealed to be from an ordinary old lantern, so is there a reasonable explanation for the "blood-coloured figure" to be found in Diggory's vocation as a reddleman (*Return* 70). This two-part system allows Hardy to approximate the balance that he was always seeking between 'the uncommon and the

ordinary so as on the one hand to give interest, on the other to give reality'" (*Life* 154). In light of Hardy's discussions of the shortfalls of realism in the visual arts, it is natural that he might turn to supernatural depictions in order to provide more "dramatic color" to the novel (Carpenter 231). Hardy's reliance on the aesthetic interplay of the grotesque and color fights against the influence of the ordinary, providing what Richard Carpenter refers to as a "more significant aesthetic experience" for the reader (231).

This interaction between Johnny and Diggory leads into one of the most interesting visual effects provided by Diggory's coloring throughout the novel. After Johnny leaves the reddleman, having first revealed that he had just seen Thomasin's fiancé Wildeve meeting secretly with Eustacia after the bonfire, Diggory digs out of his red bags the tattered old letter in which Thomasin had rejected his own proposal of marriage several years before. This letter, which has been transformed into a sort of red Valentine from years of interaction with Diggory's reddle, is perhaps the most striking of the red images throughout the novel, because it successful blends literary and artistic conventions. The narrator describes the letter thus: "The writing had originally been traced on white paper, but the letter had now assumed a pale red tinge from the accident of its situation; and the black strokes of writing thereon looked like the twigs of a winter hedge against a vermilion sunset" (*Return* 72). This painterly description of the letter questions the conventions of literary expression: in its rendering of writing as "twigs of a winter hedge against a vermillion sunset," the image not only takes that which is monochrome, black ink on white paper, and makes it colorful, but it also takes what is two dimensional, writing on paper, and turns it into an image of a three-dimensional

landscape. If Hardy's writing sometimes takes the three-dimensional and turns it into two dimensions, such as when the narrator figures Clym's face "as a page" to be read (143), Hardy also reverses the process, making that which is textual resemble the pictorial.

The pictorial description of the letter enriches and exploits the color of the image as it moves from a "pale red tint" to the saturated color of Diggory's familiar "vermilion" coloring (74). The use of the artistic nomenclature for the particular shade of vermilion incorporates a sense of painterly description that evokes the strong and dramatic sunset effects painted by Turner. The image of the red-tinged letter as a landscape goes beyond the pictorial to the ekphrastic because it evokes works of representational art through its subject matter and color vocabulary. In brief moments such as this, Hardy questions the relationship between the verbal and the visual. Although Hardy expressed distaste for the term, his "word-painting" consistently explores the relationship between writing and painting, two separate media that were nonetheless understood to be "connect[ed]" in the Victorian period (Losano 5).[69] It could be argued that Hardy continues the project of his favorite artist Turner in the literary field. If Turner begins with historical and biblical myths and turns them into art, "transmut[ing] his literary sources into 'tinted steam'" (Janson 677), then Hardy provides the opposite, as he takes artistic elements and turns them into literary ones. By bringing in the colorful visual effects enabled by the reddleman's appearance, Hardy not only tests the boundaries of realism, but also the boundaries set up between painting and fiction. His description of the love letter/landscape reduces the distance between art and

literature, writing and painting, and works to push the nature of literary creation beyond the merely textual through the use of color and his own special form of "word-painting."

Race

The aesthetic play that Hardy finds in the visual possibilities of color partially masks, but should not diminish, the important political ramifications of making Diggory a "colored" character. Hardy's use of red, like that of the grotesque, falls under the category of what Nicola Harris terms his "characteristic subversive gestures" (24). In this particular gesture, Hardy exploits the undercurrent of racial meaning inherent in Diggory's colored skin in the cause of social and textual disruption. Like the true chromophile, he makes use of color's capacity for "disorder and liberty" to question the accepted social divisions of Victorian life (Batchelor 71). Diggory finds liberty in his mobility between whiteness and redness, as well as within the heath and its social groups, and this movement, in turn, disorders social hierarchies of class, race, and gender. Constantly in flux himself, Diggory cannot be assigned a fixed position that stabilizes categories of difference and therefore he troubles all social divisions. Although Diggory returns to whiteness at the end of the novel, with his challenge against the status quo collapsing into its reinforcement, the legacy of his subversion remains to illustrate the constructed nature of social hierarchies. Even in the midst of Diggory's happy ending, Hardy interrupts his own text through the addition of a footnote that exposes the text's belated containment of the red man as an empty capitulation to publishing convention.

Diggory is often presented as a racially ambiguous, but nevertheless "colored" outsider throughout the novel. His skin color carries these racialized meanings from his first appearance in the text, in which the narrator describes the effects of reddle on the skin as "stamp[ing] unmistakably, as with the mark of Cain, any person who has handled it half an hour" (71). This reference to the mark of Cain recalls contemporary racial origin theories that drew on biblical authority in order to position the black races as descendents of Cain, whose skin, it was claimed, was turned black by in punishment for Cain's murder of his brother Abel. This connection made between black skin and Cain's sin, as Susan Gubar reminds us, was commonly used as a justification for the enslavement of Africans throughout the nineteenth century (126-127). In comparing Diggory's "sinister redness" to the mark of Cain in the second chapter, Hardy signals to the reader early on that Diggory's color is meant to signal racial difference (129). In particular, Hardy plays on color's traditional alignment with now familiar elements of racial discourse, including "the primitive" and "the oriental" (Batchelor 23). Over the course of the novel, the fact of Diggory's redness is used to align him with several specific racial groups, which can be categorized as either primitive in nature or oriental in origin. These groups include ancient Britons, Native Americans, Arabs, and Gypsies. The ease with which Diggory's treatment shifts between these groups illustrates the multiplicity of his color and constant racial fluctuation.

First, Diggory is associated with the primitive through the source of his red coloring and its ties to the ancient practice of body painting. Many ancient groups of the British isles practiced body painting: the Picts (whose name is Latin for the "painted

ones") are perhaps best-known for having painted themselves blue, but they also made use of "Iron Red" for the same purposes, which was noted as far back as the work of Roman historian Jordanes (5). Similarly, tales from Irish mythology carry the history of red body painting: W. B. Yeats's *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry* references the *Far Darrig* or *Fear Dearg* (Gaelic for "Red Man"), a leprechaun-like figure who "wears a red cap and coat, [and] busies himself with practical joking, especially with gruesome joking" (80). The fact of this historical practice was well publicized in the years after 1823, when the very "first human fossil ever to have been recovered anywhere in the world" was found in South Wales (Aldhouse-Green), not far from Hardy's birthplace of Dorchester and the imagined setting for his Wessex novels. Although male, the skeleton was mistakenly named the "Red Lady of Paviland" because it was, in Oxford Professor William Buckland's original wording, "enveloped by a coating of a kind of ruddle." Buckland and his team's own cultural assumptions concerning the color red led them to interpret the coloring as signaling a form of sexual shame, and they posited that the skeleton must have been a female prostitute from the Roman era. It is now known that the red ochre was an important element of ceremonial burial during the Paleolithic era and that the remains of the so-called Red Lady date back approximately 26,000 years (Aldhouse-Green). Hardy, as an archeology and antiquarian enthusiast,[70] could hardly have missed such a famous case in his own backyard. In fact, Hardy makes explicit reference to this ancient tradition of body painting in *The Return of the Native* in a discussion of the archeological traces left on the heath by the "forgotten Celtic tribes" of Wessex's past, whom the narrator refers to as the "dyed barbarians"

(316). Diggory's association with the red trade, and his singular red color, align him with these original pagan inhabitants of the heath and illustrate his alienation from the modern English way of life. This alienation is further emphasized by the association of the reddleman's occupation with the concept of extinction: the text states, "He [Diggory] was one of a class rapidly becoming extinct in Wessex, filling at present in the rural world the place which, during the last century, the dodo occupied in the world of animal" (12). Yet the same red coloring that symbolizes Diggory's outsider status and dying trade could also be seen to mark his belonging on the heath, because the reddle trade derives from the land of Southwestern England and the practices of its ancient peoples.

Diggory's red color can also be read as creating a parallel between his character and other "primitive" groups who were still using body painting in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The novel's title works to keep these peoples in the reader's mind by making use of the multiple meanings of the word "native." The title is usually interpreted as describing the return to Egdon Heath of the protagonist Clym Yeobright, a native of the area who has been living abroad in Paris.[71] In the nineteenth century, "native" was used as an adjective to refer to "the place of a person's birth and early life" ("Native," def. 9a), but would certainly have also suggested the common (now considered offensive) usage of the term as a noun that referred to the indigenous populations of European colonies. Hardy seems to be making use of both meanings of the term, as Diggory is a native of Egdon Heath as well as aligned with the "red natives" of North America through his pagan pigments and stigmatized skin color. The fact that

his red coloring comes from red ochre rather than biology only strengthens the comparison, as many colonial peoples, such as the Native Americans and Australian Aborigines, made use of ochre coloring. Historically, the association of Native Americans with red skin color can be traced back to the first encounters of Europeans with the Beothuk peoples of Newfoundland, who painted themselves with red ochre as protection against insects and cold, as well as a "mark of tribal identity" (Marshall 338). This practice led to French reports of "red savages" on the island (57), and the later conflation of red paint and copper skin tone into the stereotype of the "red-skinned" Native American. The association of "native" peoples and ochre was still well known in the Victorian era; in 1860, there was a political conflict in Australia, informally known as "the ochre wars," over the suppression of the Aboriginal traditional journey to collect red ochre, which they used in bartering, artwork, and sacred ritual (Finlay 31-3). As a nearly extinct reddle man, Diggory is aligned with these "native" peoples not only through his colored skin, indicative of racial difference, but also through its cause in red ochre.

Despite the nostalgia surrounding the loss of traditional British agricultural practices such as the reddle occupation, Diggory's association with primitive peoples does not necessarily reflect negatively on his character, as might be assumed. Instead, primitivism is positioned as freeing Diggory to some extent from the constraints of modern life. He wanders the heath as his ancestors had before him, without regard or need for a permanent home despite the dictates of society. This is particularly evident through Diggory's clear association with the second category of otherness: the Oriental.

Whereas the meanings of primitivism and extinction float around Diggory through his color and ties to the land, Hardy is more explicit in his orientalization of Diggory throughout the text. The narrator directly compares the reddleman with specific non-Western groups, particularly Arabs and Gypsies. This set of associations and direct allusions do not seem to draw on Diggory's colored (dyed) skin, but rather on its dark appearance, as well as the British cultural association of traveling lifestyles with Eastern peoples.

The flexibility of Diggory's racialized treatment reflects the discourse of race science prominent at the time, as well as the common emphasis put on light and dark hierarchies. In *Races of Men: A Fragment* (1850), a scientific text meant to delineate the different racial groups of humanity, author Robert Knox uses a light/dark binary to lump together such differing peoples as the Jews, Gypsies, and Copts; for instance, he lists all three as "belonging to the dark races of men. They are African and Asiatic, not European" (300). As Susan Meyer explains in *Imperialism at Home,* "Much as Knox is preoccupied [in his text] with the finer distinctions of race, these distinctions have a way of breaking down, in his writing, as in that of his contemporaries, into the fundamental division between light and dark" (16). It is for this reason that Knox speaks of the "dark races," a term that he applies to nearly every non-European group from Africans to Asians. The distance between the dark races was collapsible for European race scientists such as Knox; in fact, Knox went so far as to state that these three aforementioned groups "Originat[ed] from the same stock with their fellow men of all colours," implying that all "dark" peoples have the same origins (300). This tendency on the part of

Victorian science may inform the variations in Hardy's treatment of Diggory's racial characteristics. It appears that once Diggory crosses over into redness, he has entered the realm of the "dark races"; the particular racial group that he resembles at any one time is almost beside the point. The demonstrable element is that he is othered by his coloring, and for this reason he moves seamlessly between several racial groups within the text.

Hardy's orientalized descriptions of Diggory draw on both the social connotations of the color red, historically used to mark difference in the West, as well as direct metaphors of stigmatized ethnic groups within Europe and the Near East. The first of these, the social meanings of the color red, would have worked to implicitly align Diggory not only with native peoples of the British Empire, but also with common stereotypes of Jewish people. Although Knox describes the pure Jew as a "dark tawny, yellow-coloured person" (300), a description that mixes darkness with specific color terms, Jews have also been symbolized by the color red as far back as the Middle Ages. In biblical legend, red hair was understood to mark Jews physically as a punishment for having shed the blood of Jesus. Red also came to function as a symbol of Judas's greed in betraying Jesus, leading to the stereotype of "the Jewish usurer, typically portrayed with red hair" on the stage and in art over hundreds of years (Pleij 80-1). In the nineteenth century, Charles Dickens participated in this historical stereotype, using red hair to characterize greedy and duplicitous characters such as the Jewish Fagin in *Oliver Twist* (1838), as well as Uriah Heep in *David Copperfield* (1850). Critic Tara MacDonald draws attention to the fact that Uriah possesses both red hair and an "odd

skin color" characterized by a "pervading red" tint; she argues that this is meant to align Uriah with the "Secret Jew," a common trope that derives from the "belief that England was being infiltrated by rebellious, power-hungry Jews in Christian disguises" (53). In exploiting the historical connotations of red coloring in his writing, Dickens's *David Copperfield* creates a literary precedent for Hardy's completely red character in *The Return of the Native* nearly thirty years later.

Although the cultural association of red with Jewish heritage was one that Victorian readers were unlikely to miss, Hardy is more explicit in his comparison of Diggory to Arab and Gypsy populations in the text through the use of metaphors and similes. This is likely due to Diggory's unconventional lifestyle, his so-called "wild mode of life" as a traveling salesman without a permanent domicile (*Return* 134). For instance, Diggory, in "camping about there" on Egdon Heath, is described by the narrator to be "like Israel in Zin" (129). Editor Phillip Mallett clarifies that this simile refers to the biblical account of "the Israelites pitch[ing] camp in 'the wilderness of Zin' during their journey from Egypt to Canaan" (129). In the very next paragraph, Eustacia refers to Diggory as an "Ishmaelitish creature" that Thomasin would not be likely to accept as suitor (129). The allusion to the biblical figure Ishmael, son of Abraham, refers to one who is "at war with society," an apt description of Diggory's rejection of a common occupation and social convention in his romantic disappointment ("Ishmael"). However, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, Ishmaelite also meant a "descendant of Ishmael, as the Arabs claim to be"; in literature, this version of the term was used to reference the nomadic lifestyle of desert Arabs.[72] That Hardy had this

meaning in mind is suggested earlier in the text when the narrator categorizes Diggory's "peregrination among farms" as a type of "Arab existence" (71). Similarly, the narrator compares Diggory's cold demeanor in his interactions with the devious Wildeve to that of "an Arab," as well as "an automaton" (195).[73] The repetition of this association makes clear to the reader the ties that Hardy sees between the reddleman and traditionally nomadic peoples from Eastern Europe and the Near East. Yet even as Hardy orientalizes the traveling lifestyle, he also idealizes it, especially when the narrator laments that the reddle trade has been fading slowly "Since the introduction of railways" (71). He nostalgically states that even those reddleman "who yet survive are losing the poetry of existence which characterized them when the pursuit of the trade meant periodical journeys to the pit whence the material was dug, [and] a regular camping out from month to month" (71). This passage illustrates the text's yearning for the freedom of movement afforded both to the historical traveler and the Arab other.

Other racial comparisons also derive from Diggory's traveler status, such as his repeated affiliation with the Gypsy figure. The narrator tells the reader that "The reddleman lived like a gipsy" (71), and when little Johnny Nunsuch meets Diggory on the heath alone at night, the boy mistakenly believes he has come across the "cart of a gipsy" (68). Interestingly, Johnny's "dread of those wanderers" is described as "mild," while the reddleman is perceived to be a greater threat (68). The narrator explains that, to Johnny, "Uglier persons than gipsies were known to cross Egdon at times, and a reddleman was one of them." When Johnny learns of the reddleman's presence, he responds by exclaiming, "How I wish 'twas only a gipsy!" (68). Beyond illustrating that

Diggory's social stigma is greater than that of the only-mildly-frightening Gypsies, this scene suggests that the comparison of the reddleman and the Gypsy relies on the presence of Diggory's van and the nomadic lifestyle it symbolizes.

Yet the text's reiteration of Diggory's resemblance to the Gypsy also transfers to his character the suggestion of racial otherness. In the nineteenth century, the Gypsies, like Jews, were seen "not merely [as] a distinct group with specific social practices and means of subsistence but [as] a separate race" residing within the borders of England (Nord 189). Abby Bardi explains that "the term 'Gypsies' suggests the mistaken assumption that they come from Egypt and constructs them as an 'Oriental' population in the heart of Britain. During the nineteenth century, the Gypsy is othered, Orientalized, and as such, represented as being in violation of the social norms that define British national identity" (37). This characterization of the Romani was often disseminated through literature, where the figure of the Gypsy functioned as a "constant, ubiquitous marker of otherness, of non-Englishness or foreignness" (Nord 189). Through the racialized characterization of the reddleman as both Gypsy and Arab, Hardy establishes Diggory's racialized difference and systematically presents the native Diggory as a foreign Other on the heath.

However, it is also true that the romantic Gypsy was a "clearly established literature trope" in nineteenth-century British literature (Bardi 32). He or she served as a powerful symbol of resistance, who "could signify social marginality, nomadism, alienation, and lawlessness" (Nord 189), as well as "a threat that throws the order and detail of every-day life into relief" (Trumpener 874). Hardy captures these elements of

social threat and resistance through Diggory's ability to mimic the Gypsy's "challenges to the status quo" (Bardi 32). Diggory's disruptions, illustrated both by his unusual skin color and his traveling life style, align closely with Hardy's own tendency to question the "status quo" of what he consistently sees as a repressive social order. Hardy's challenge extends beyond his clear alignment of Diggory with the racial other as Diggory's character is used to disrupt other social categories. The author seems to particularly delight in how the reddleman's unusual domestic circumstances disrupt any attempt to assign him a fixed class and gender position.

Diggory's ability to subvert well established social hierarchies is best illustrated in the two successive scenes, discussed previously, in which little Johnny stumbles into Diggory's camp, followed by Diggory's perusal of his old rejection letter from Thomasin. These scenes serve as an important transition in how the reader interprets Diggory's character. His previous appearances in the text have been narrated through the eyes of other characters such as Captain Vye, the heath-dwellers at the bonfire on Rainbarrow, Mrs. Yeobright, and Johnny. When Johnny leaves, after having accidentally informed Diggory that Thomasin's intended husband was meeting secretly with Eustacia out on the heath, the narrative for the first time turns its attention to Diggory's thoughts and feelings and reveals that Diggory is motivated by his long-standing love of Thomasin. The novel also takes this opportunity to explain Diggory's true position to the reader, in the form of a lecture from Diggory to Johnny. When the frightened Johnny asks Diggory, "You won't carry me off in your bags, will ye, master? 'Tis said that the reddleman will sometimes," Diggory curtly replies: "Nonsense. All

that reddlemen do is sell reddle. You see all those bags at the back of my cart? They are not full of little boys—only full of red stuff" (*Return* 69). Johnny then asks Diggory if he was born a reddleman, suggesting that the boy views "reddleman" as a biological designation (akin to being red native), rather than an occupation. Diggory answers in defense of his white status, stating:

> No, I took to it. I should be as white as you if I were to give up the trade—that is, I should be white in time—perhaps six months: not at first, because 'tis grow'd into my skin and won't wash out. Now, you'll never be afraid of a reddleman again, will ye? (69)

While this encounter provides a lesson for the superstitious Johnny, this information seems to be directed at the reader as well. When Johnny learns that differences in external appearance are not always to be feared, the text models for the reader a more accepting way of viewing Diggory's racial situation. However, it should also be noted that this lesson is predicated on the fact of Diggory's whiteness, which removes the threat of true otherness from the scene.

After Johnny leaves Diggory, the narrator goes on to corroborate Diggory's explanation of his whiteness beneath his red coloring. The narrator declares, "The one point that was forbidding about this reddleman was his colour. Freed from that he would have been as agreeable a specimen of rustic manhood as one would often see" (72). This is similar to the narrator's previous discussion of Diggory's fine facial structure in his first appearance in the novel, which described the reddleman as having eyes as "blue as autumn mist" and a face that "approached so near to handsome that nobody would have

contradicted an assertion that it really was so in its natural color" (12). These quotations establish the Anglo-Saxon features to be found concealed beneath Diggory's external coloring, confirming the acceptability of his character to the Victorian reader by reiterating his internal whiteness. On the other hand, the mere necessity of such passages, in which Diggory's heredity cannot be clearly determined by external characteristics and must be further explained, works to disentangle skin color from biology and defy easy divisions between racial groups. Furthermore, Diggory's explanation to Johnny sets up the possibility of his return to whiteness, a point that highlights his mobility and agency in traversing the binary between colored and white.

As the above quotations demonstrate, the emphasis placed on Diggory's inner whiteness is also an emphasis on his status as a white male. The narrator works hard to establish Diggory's masculinity by declaring him "handsome" and "attractive" (12), the embodiment of "rustic manhood" (72). Eustacia also confirms Diggory's physical attractions for the opposite sex, as she notes to herself: "His figure was perfect, his face young and well-outlined, his eye bright, his intelligence keen" (129). This insistent desire to illustrate Diggory's virile appearance and masculine intelligence may be included to presage the fulfillment of the marriage plot, since he and Thomasin marry at the conclusion of the text, but it also suggests that Hardy worried that Diggory's masculinity might potentially be questioned by reader or critic. Hardy's anxiety may result from Diggory being doubly stigmatized through his relation to the other, who has been traditionally feminized, as well as to color, which has also been associated with the female side of the binary. Furthermore, color's cultural meanings have encompassed a

relationship to "the queer," alongside associations with "the feminine," "the oriental," and "the primitive" (Batchelor 23). These connections lead me to wonder: Can we read the colorful Diggory as a queer character?

This is a question with which Hardy critics seem reluctant to engage, as very little work has been done with masculinity and queer theory regarding Hardy's body of work. Although Thomas Hardy's works are, as Kristin Brady avers, often "explicitly and obsessively associated with matters of gender" (93), this discussion has been primarily focused on Hardy's portrayal of femininity. It has only been in the past two decades that Hardy's portrayal of masculinity has become a "growing area of concern" for critics (Brady 104). Even less attention has been paid to the queer possibilities of Hardy's texts, with critical engagement primarily limited to Hardy's late novel *Jude the Obscure* (1895).[74] Yet Diggory certainly is queer in the nineteenth-century meaning of the term as "strange" or "odd" (*OED*, def. 1a); it may be that he may also be read as queer in the twenty-first century sense of the word, suggestive as he is of non-normative ways of living. Certainly his odd appearance and resistance to traditional forms of identity suggests a deviance from Victorian norms that may be likened to queerness, if not homosexuality. Furthermore, he embodies other qualities that theorists such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick have associated with queerness including "instability" and "ambiguity" (10, 34). This study has attempted to make Diggory the center of critical interpretation, tying together the connections between otherness, mobility, and color, but much remains to be done in the future, including larger inquiries into Diggory's potential queerness.

In relation to gender, much of Diggory's challenge to social conventions derives from his mobility and occupation, which prohibits the gendered division of work typical to the Victorian period. As a man who travels with his horses dutifully pulling his van that is both home and office, stocked with the goods of his trade as well as his stove and personal effects, Diggory's situation subverts the Victorian distinction between the public sphere of the man of business and the domestic sphere of the permanent home. Similarly, the single Diggory must perform his own domestic chores; for instance, in the scene in which Johnny peeks in through his open door, Diggory is busy darning a stocking. Although Diggory's task is non-threatening in nature, Johnny is so frightened by Diggory's red appearance that he missteps and tumbles down a slope, injuring his hand. Diggory helps the scared boy, soothing him and binding the boy's wound, before walking him back to his path home. Diggory's actions in this scene, as well as his devotion to Thomasin, mark his character as possessing what Dalziel terms a "'feminine' delicacy" towards others throughout the text (108).

Just as the text emphasizes Diggory's domestic side by depicting him in actions like darning and nursing, the illustration that appeared in the original serial publication also accentuates the domestic nature of Diggory's environment in a clear attempt to "elicit sympathy for Venn" (Dalziel 108). The illustration depicts the scene immediately following Johnny's departure in which the lovelorn Diggory returns to his van and retrieves his old love letter from Thomasin (see fig. A-6). Illustrator Arthur Hopkins pictures Diggory encompassed within the interior of his van, surrounded by various domestic implements such as a stove, kettle, and pots and pans, as well as the sacks of

reddle necessary to his occupation (108). In the drawing, captioned "The reddleman re-reads an old love letter," Diggory bends over his letter, lit by a lantern, a mournful, thoughtful expression on his face, in an attitude that illustrates his continuing fondness for Thomasin.[75] Dalziel argues that Diggory's complex portrayal represents the "characteristically Hardyan construction of masculinity," in which his possession of "such 'womanly' virtues as patience, modesty, and self-abnegating devotion" is countered by his "ideals of manliness" and "chivalry" (108). These two sides of the reddleman work together: in his devotion to his old love Thomasin, Diggory become a powerful, even dangerous, enemy of her philandering fiancé Wildeve and is illustrated to have a manly sense of duty and moral compass rivaling that of protagonist Clym. Diggory's complex characterization—combined with his single status, traveling lifestyle, and blending of public and domestic spheres—function to interrogate the constructed division between male and female within the text and Victorian society at large.

Perhaps even more interesting than Diggory's complicated gender status is his fluctuating class position, which leads critics like Sara A. Malton to refer to the reddleman as a "lower-class oddity" despite the fact that he is wealthier than many of the characters in the novel (153). Even the narrator cannot entirely isolate Diggory's class position despite numerous attempts to do so. The narrator does reveal, however, that it was the divisions of the class system that motivated Diggory to sell off his farmland and become a reddleman in the first place. When a pensive Diggory takes up Thomasin's old letter after Johnny's departure, the reader learns that Thomasin had rejected

Diggory's marriage proposal because her aunt Mrs. Yeobright did not approve of him as a suitable match. Thomasin states in the letter, "she would want me to look a little higher than a small dairy-farmer and marry a professional man" (*Return* 74). It is in his anger and disappointment that Diggory makes the decision to "shift[] his position even further from hers than it had originally been, by adopting the reddle trade" (74). From the beginning, Diggory conceives of his new occupation as a rebellion of sorts against the class system and its restrictions. Had Thomasin accepted Diggory, he might never have developed into the difficult character that questions social divisions; as a small farmer with land and a family, he would have most likely respected the status quo and would most certainly have remained white. It is suggested that it is the hierarchical rankings of class conventions that drive an otherwise average Englishman to rebel in such a manner as to "relinquish his proper station in life for want of interest in it" (72).

The narrator finds it difficult to identify the exact alterations to Diggory's class position after he turns to the reddle trade. The narrator confirms to the reader that Johnny's view of the reddleman as more frightening than a Gypsy is a common conception, but emphasizes that Diggory does not view himself in that manner. The narrator explains:

> The reddleman lived like a gipsy; but gipsies he scorned. He was about as thriving as travelling basket and mat makers; but he had nothing to do with them. He was more decently born and brought up than the cattle-drovers who passed and repassed him in his wanderings; but they merely nodded to him. His stock was more valuable than that of pedlars; but

> they did not think so, and passed his car with eyes straight ahead. He was such an unnatural colour to look at that the men of roundabouts and wax-works shows seemed gentlemen beside him; but he considered them low company, and remained aloof. Among all these squatters and folks of the road the reddleman continually found himself; yet he was not of them. (71)

"Decently born and brought up" illustrates Diggory's class status, as viewed by himself and the narrator, yet this status is either not acknowledged or not apparent to the other traveling merchants, who "seemed gentlemen beside him." Class status here is characterized as vulnerable to change; in choosing the wrong occupation, Diggory not only loses his community standing, but also his respectability. Through his choice of profession, combined with the racial stigma of his "unnatural color," Diggory has fallen to the bottom of the class hierarchy, disreputable to the "squatters and folks of the road" despite his relative prosperity from his successful trade. Here class status does not reflect either the position to which one was born or the possession of monetary wealth, and is instead subject to external appearances. Diggory appears disreputable, and is therefore understood to be disreputable, snubbed even by the lowest classes of social outcasts.

Yet despite illustrating that Diggory's class status and economic status are two different questions, the novel still takes the time to establish Diggory's thriving financial position. The narrator states that in the face of external appearances, Diggory "was really in very good circumstances still. Indeed, seeing that his expenditure was only

one-fourth his income, he might have been called a prosperous man" (74). Although Diggory consciously chooses to lower his class position by becoming a reddleman, and seems to enjoy the freedoms his new trade provides, the novel still wishes to validate Diggory's financial position. A few days after Johnny's visit informs Diggory of Wildeve's illicit meeting with Eustacia, the reddleman renews his pursuit of Thomasin's hand in marriage, baldly asserting to her aunt, Mrs. Yeobright, that his own economic position may be better than that of Thomasin's chosen husband, the former engineer Wildeve.[76] Diggory states, "There's many a calling that don't bring in so much as mine, if it comes to money; and perhaps I am not so much worse off than Wildeve. There is nobody so poor as these professional fellows who have failed" (87). Diggory also reminds Mrs. Yeobright that if she "shouldn't like my redness—well, I am not red by birth, you know; I only took to this business for a freak; and I might turn my hand to something else in good time" (87). On the one hand, the text admires Diggory for taking to a business "for a freak" and the challenge such a choice provides to the status quo of social convention. On the other hand, to reward this likeable if odd character, the narrative must contrive to win him the reader's sympathy and raise his standing as a potential suitor for Thomasin. While the reference to Diggory's "birth" confirms his position as a white Englishman and the racial equivalent of Wildeve, the text also reminds the reader that his financial "position [was] one which he could readily better if he chose" (129), in order to raise the possibility of Diggory's return to a more respectable occupation. It is during these scenes in which Diggory's gender, class, and racial positions are most called into question that the narrator works hardest to establish

the reddleman as respectable economically and his motivations as understandable to the Victorian reader.

The redundancy and paradoxical depictions of this series of passages demonstrate Hardy's underlying discomfort with Diggory's difference. Although the author attempts to gain the reader's sympathy towards Diggory as a colored other, he instead succeeds only in winning the reader's sympathy *in spite of* Diggory's otherness, highlighting as he does the many ways in which the racial, gender, and economic status of the reddleman is actually acceptable. In doing so, the text falls into a practice that can be found in many narratives of racial passing. For instance, in the twentieth century's *Black Like Me*, a white man, John Howard Griffin, darkens his skin color in order to pass as a black man in the segregated American South and report on his experiences. Kate Baldwin has critiqued the racial politics of this narrative, pointing out that "at the same time that the author attempts to inscribe himself within a 'black' persona, his narrative creates a disjunctive space where his 'whiteness' always persists in framing his blackness" (114). Hardy's earlier text does something similar, because the reader is continually reminded of Diggory's latent and biological whiteness, even when the narrative cheers Diggory for reproaching Mrs. Yeobright's judgment of his redness: when he catches her staring at his strange coloring, Diggory dryly comments to her, "Looks are not everything" (87). Yet the stress the novel places on Diggory's masculine and decidedly Anglo-Saxon good looks suggests otherwise. In a similar manner, Diggory's treatment as a rebellious lower-class man is always framed by a discussion of his original position as someone "decently born and brought up" (71). The limitation of

Hardy's strategy is that it demonstrates that in order to conceive of the subjectivity of the Other, the Other must first have occupied a position of social belonging; Diggory's character is presented as acceptable to the reader because he is a white man turned red, rather than an actual red man. Diggory's shift from white to colored is the underpinning that makes all the other destabilizations of class and gender hierarchies possible, but all of Hardy's colorful experimentations are predicated on the fact that Diggory is a white Englishman who is only passing as the racial other. The text's repeated insistence on Diggory's original class, gender, and racial status both allows Hardy's experimental critique of social divisions and simultaneously restricts that critique because the text cannot imagine a true Other.

This discomfort exhibited by the text concerning the true extent of Diggory's otherness eventually results in the collapse of the reddleman's social rebellion and his return to whiteness near the end of the novel. In the aftermath of the novel's tragic climax—in which Diggory rescues Thomasin's cousin Clym from drowning in the churning water of the flooded weir, but is too late to save Eustacia and Thomasin's husband Wildeve—the reddleman leaves the heath for several months. During this time, Diggory gives up the reddle trade and his complexion is slowly restored to its natural color "by degrees" (317). Once this transition occurs, the novel works to erase the linguistic markers of difference—the primitive, the oriental, the feminine, and the queer—that had previously stigmatized Diggory's portrayal as a colored man, using the approval of the protagonist Clym to illustrate Diggory's new social acceptance. Diggory's reappearance in the novel is prefigured by Clym's musings during his daily

walk on the "forgotten Celtic tribes" of Egdon's past; his thoughts concerning the "dyed barbarians" of Celtic history calls to mind their present reincarnation in Egdon's reddleman (316). Yet when Diggory appears at the Yeobrights' home, Blooms-End, two paragraphs later, he is no longer a dyed barbarian, to the surprise of both protagonist and reader. Moreover, the pale Diggory is well dressed in a "white shirt front, light flowered waistcoat, blue-spotted neckerchief, and bottle-green coat," an outfit in which "Red, and all approach to red, was carefully excluded" (316-17). This "careful exclu[sion]" of all semblance of red coloring illustrates that Diggory has completely disassociated himself from his former trade and has no intention of returning to it in the future.

Protagonist Clym, now recovered from his own near drowning and the death of his wife Eustacia, reports his "astonishment" to see "Diggory Venn, no longer a reddleman, but exhibiting the strangely altered hues of an ordinary Christian countenance" (316). Clym's emphasis on Diggory's new "Christian countenance" illustrates that while Diggory was before associated with the primitive tribes of ancient Briton, various Eastern peoples, and the mark of Cain, he has now been reaccepted into the Christian fold by Clym, who will become a preacher of sorts by the novel's final chapter. As Diggory has yet to speak or explain himself at this point in the scene, this approval can only be explained by the shift in his external coloring and an implicit equation of whiteness with Christianity. Perhaps most striking is Clym's off-hand question to Diggory, "What shall we have to frighten Thomasin's baby with, now you have become a human being again?" (317). Though said "good-humouredly" (317), Clym's statement that Diggory has "become a human being again" insinuates that there

was a period when Diggory was not a human, by which Clym clearly means the period in which he was colored a lurid red. This question sums up the many registers of dehumanizing references and figures of speech supplied throughout the novel, and works to reverse them by reinstating the humanity of the now white Diggory. Because he no longer resembles a Celtic barbarian, traveling Gypsy, or red native, Diggory is now cemented as white, Christian, and therefore human "again."

But Diggory's return to his native state also illustrates that the boundaries of such binaries—white/colored, Christian/heathen, human/inhuman, and belonging/otherness—are themselves permeable. The reddleman's traversal of the boundary between white and colored is accompanied by a corresponding shift in other related binaries, confirming both the layering of Western binaries and the existence of slippage between them. If a white man turned red can successfully inhabit both sides of the series of overlapping binaries, than all boundaries are demonstrated to be open to negotiation. This negotiation is presented as acceptable in Hardy's novel because only the white man passes for colored, and not vice versa. However, even an unidirectional crossing of boundaries suggests that slippage is possible and insinuates that Western binaries are constructions, not absolute divisions.

While Clym's reaction to Diggory's return to whiteness praises the former reddleman's return to the Christian side of the binary, Thomasin's response recalls Diggory's former supernatural appearance and the "strange[ness]" of his new ordinariness. Upon first seeing him, she exclaims to Diggory, "O, how you frightened me! . . . I thought you were the ghost of yourself" (316). While Fairway had formerly

described Diggory as a red ghost (27), Thomasin's exclamation figures his newly achieved pale complexion as ghostly. This comment registers a small sense of loss in Diggory's return to whiteness and normativity, especially when Thomasin continues to Clym, "I was so alarmed! . . . I couldn't believe that he had got white of his own accord! It seemed supernatural" (317). Diggory's sudden whiteness may seems uncanny to Thomasin, but there is also a dawning sexual attraction on her part. She tells him: "You look much better than ever you did before" (317). Diggory's confusion at this comment, as well as Thomasin's answering blush, signals the resurgence of their romantic relationship. This first exchange foreshadows their upcoming marriage and Diggory's taking up of the traditional Victorian masculine roles of husband and father.

This change in their relationship is accompanied by a similar change in Diggory's class position and lifestyle. Diggory announces to the two cousins that he has renounced the traveling lifestyle in favor of a more respectable occupation. He explains that he had "made enough" in trading reddle "to take the dairy of fifty cows that my father had in his lifetime" (317). Furthermore, he has committed himself more seriously to his new business, declaring that he has "given up body and soul to the making of money. Money is all my dream" (323). Although this is stated in a joking tone, it is clear that Diggory regards making money as a viable path to achieving his goal of marrying Thomasin. The new business-oriented Diggory is invited to stay for tea, and while Mrs. Yeobright had previously kept him waiting on the porch or in the kitchen when he came to Blooms-End, Thomasin tells him, "you must sit down here" (317). Diggory's reception in the parlour indicates his new social acceptability now that he has,

in Clym's words, "turned over a new leaf" (326). This new leaf includes a more socially accepted domestic lifestyle as Diggory now chooses to lead a settled existence at his father's old farm at Stickleford. In doing so, Diggory not only returns to his previous class position as a small farmer, but also climbs even higher on the social ladder upon his marriage to Thomasin. On Wildeve's death, Thomasin and her daughter Eustacia became the recipients of Wildeve's recent inheritance of almost ten thousand pounds, leaving Thomasin a "mistress of money" who is able to "indulge" herself by employing "three servants" (315). When Diggory marries Thomasin and takes her and her baby back to his Stickleford farm, he achieves the status of a wealthy family man. In the end, Hardy's decision to return Diggory to whiteness not only removes his external marking of otherness, but also results in solidifying his class and racial status while folding him back into a proper domestic lifestyle.

Yet, even as *The Return of the Native*'s ending reinforces common gender, class, and racial ideologies in Diggory's abandonment of the reddle trade and marriage to Thomasin, the author raises the specter of a rogue Diggory who cannot be controlled by popular desires. In the midst of the tidy happy ending for Thomasin and Diggory, Hardy interrupts his own story to assert in a footnote that he would have preferred to leave Diggory a strange and unattached figure at the conclusion of the novel. He writes in the 1912 Wessex edition:

> The writer may state here that the original conception of the story did not design a marriage between Thomasin and Venn. He was to have retained his isolated and weird character to the last, and to have

> disappeared mysteriously from the heath, nobody knowing whither—Thomasin remaining a widow. But certain circumstances of serial publication led to a change of intent.
>
> Readers can therefore choose between the endings, and those with an austere artistic code can assume the more consistent conclusion to be the true one. (327)

Hardy's reference to the "circumstances of serial publication" makes allusion to the difficulty that he had had in originally placing the novel. Editor Leslie Stephen, who had published *Far From the Madding Crowd* (1874) and *The Hand of Ethelberta* (1876), turned down *The Return of the Native*, suggesting that the work in its original form might be too "'dangerous' for a family magazine" such as his *Cornhill* (Dalziel 85). After revisions and further rejections by *Blackwood's* and *Temple Bar*, *The Return of the Native* was finally serialized in *Belgravia*, a periodical most notable for publishing the work of sensation novelists such as Mary Elizabeth Braddon (85-6).[77] The inclusion of this footnote in the later edition of the novel, as Dalziel argues, "register[s] . . . the degree to which he was still troubled by the textual concessions he had made in advance of the serialization of *The Return of the Native*" even after thirty years had passed (110). While the novel's final chapters illustrate Hardy's anxiety over Diggory's colorful rebellion, which is curtailed and replaced with whiteness, his footnote expresses his dissatisfaction with the artificiality of the novel's happy ending. What is left unstated is that in order for Thomasin and Diggory to marry, it was necessary to return the reddleman to respectability to appease conservative reading audiences. Hardy's ultimate

concession was the return of Diggory to whiteness and the expulsion of color, when his personal inclination to maintain Diggory's freedom and mystery to the end and have him be the one to carry out Eustacia and Wildeve's aspirations to escape the confines of the heath. This favored, though non-existent ending, suggests the author's desire to create a disruptive force that defies all containment and reflects his lingering yearning for the liberty and disorder represented by his chromophilia.

The footnote's appeal to the reader's "artistic code" not only pushes the reader towards Hardy's preferred vision of Diggory as the colorful and rebellious Other, but also calls attention to the pictorial qualities of the text. Hardy's chromophilia works so well because it balances the artistic play made possible by color with the political realities of skin color. Hardy's choice of red—a color already highly charged with racial meaning in Western discourse—as the dominant symbol of Diggory's subversion and mobility allows the author to demonstrate the instability inherent in Western practices of othering and hierarchical organization. In such a way, *The Return of the Native* serves as a transition from the figurative use of blue, the non-human color, in Collin's *Poor Miss Finch* eight years before to the fin de siècle's more direct exploration of yellowness and its many meanings in race science and modernity. Although Hardy, like Collins, steers away from a direct discussion of miscegenation by returning Diggory to whiteness before his marriage to Thomasin, the use of the color red in his novel helps to make possible later explorations of color in connection to miscegenation and racial contagion in the fiction of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Frances Hodgson Burnett.

CHAPTER V

YELLOW: SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE'S "THE YELLOW FACE" AND FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT'S *THE SECRET GARDEN*

By the end of the nineteenth century, the dependence on color as a marker of difference became, if anything, further entrenched. In the end, the development of race science as a discipline worked to enforce, rather than question, the Enlightenment investment in classification and the science of surfaces. Rather than establish color as a means to question absolute divisions between races as Hardy and Collins do, fin de siècle writers use color to crystallize notions of difference. Yellow, in particular, is used in this capacity more frequently than the other colors discussed in this dissertation, though the signifier itself is applied diffusely to many peoples and places throughout the globe. For instance, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in the Sherlock Holmes mystery "The Yellow Face" (1893), associates yellowness with the diseases of the Americas and Anglo-African miscegenation. The yellow signifiers that float around the little girl Lucy Hebron become clues in the detection of her racial difference. The short story draws on Doyle's own knowledge of the medical field to portray the diagnosis of Lucy's foreign infection by "medico-criminal" team Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson (Doyle 2: 388). The Anglo-American Frances Hodgson Burnett also locates the sign of foreign corruption in yellowness, this time on the body of a little English girl, Mary Lennox, who is born in India.[78] Burnett's domestic novel *The Secret Garden* (1911) makes use

of imperialist discourses on biological determinism, temperate versus tropical binaries, and a medical understanding of India as a site of white mortality to demonstrate the physical and psychological damage inflicted on white bodies by colonial life abroad.

Both "The Yellow Face" and *The Secret Garden* were written between 1880 and 1914, a time period that Patrick Brantlinger identifies as the "dusk" of the British Empire (225-27). As Brantlinger points out, although this era marks the height of the empire, it also introduces the first glimpses of the impending decline of Britain as a world power. By the final decade of the nineteenth century, according to Stephen D. Arata, "Victorian confidence in the inevitability of British progress and hegemony" was being quickly "erode[d]" by a combination of "The decay of British global influence, the loss of overseas markets for British goods, the economic and political rise of Germany and the United States, the increasing unrest in British colonies and possessions, [and] the growing domestic uneasiness over the morality of imperialism" (622). Arata concludes that in response to these cultural and political pressures, "Late-Victorian fiction . . . is saturated with the sense that the entire nation—as a race of people, as a political and imperial force, as a social and cultural power—was in irretrievable decline" (622). These anxieties are exemplified in the developing narratives of "reverse colonization," which present England as the victim of foreign colonization, either by rival European powers (such as the Germans in the 1871 short story "The Battle of Dorking" or France and Russia in the 1894 novel *The Great War in England in 1897)* or by supernatural and alien forces (Bram Stoker's *Dracula* in 1897 and H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* in 1898*)*. As Yumna Siddiqi illustrates, works such as these reveal the "sense of

malaise" that belies "the triumphalist New Imperialism of the late Victorian period" (64).

These works of reverse colonization build on an earlier tradition of the colonized racial other who exacts his revenge on the West. The Romantic novel *Frankenstein* (1818), although aligned with the excesses of the gothic movement, was also, as Anne K. Mellor points out, situated on the "cutting edge of early-nineteenth-century scientific research" (3). Mellor contends that Shelley's description of the Creature as "A yellow-skinned man crossing the steppes of Russia and Tartary, with long black hair and dun-colored eyes" draws on the late eighteenth-century ethnographic research of Johann Friedrich Blumenbach to position the Creature as a racial other (3). She argues that "most of Mary Shelley's nineteenth-century readers would immediately have recognized the Creature as a member of the Mongolian race" according to Blumenbach's division of the five races of man (2-3). It is in *Frankenstein* that Mellor locates the first signs of the literary sinophobia that later results in the yellow peril explosion of the fin de siècle and twentieth century.

Matthew Phipps Shiel's *The Yellow Danger* (1898), published in the same year as *The War of the Worlds*, envisioned a similar invasion of Europe by a horde of aliens, this time originating in Asia. Shiel's novel was responsible for translating the German concept of "gelben gefahr," a xenophobic term that originated with Kaiser Wilhelm II, into the English phrase "yellow peril" (Mellor 11).[79] The novel is also credited with presenting "the first individualized villain from the Far East" in its depiction of the half-Chinese and half-Japanese mastermind Yen How (Hashimoto 58). In the story, a bitter

Yen How, rejected by a common English girl, devises a plot to destroy England. This "Napoleon in yellow" convinces Japan and China to come together to manipulate the greedy European powers into invading England (60). Once Europe is made destitute and defenseless from internal warfare, How leads a pan-Asian invasion of the West. Luckily for the British, brave midshipman John Hardy repels the European and Asian attacks before using germ warfare to wipe out the remaining invading armies. Despite its outlandish plot, Shiel's novel was popular enough to warrant two sequels—*The Yellow Wave* (1905) and *The Dragon* (1913)—and it set the stage for the many Asian supervillains who followed, including the famous "devil doctor" Fu-Manchu.

Sax Rohmer's Fu-Manchu novels and stories also rewrote the narrative of Western imperial domination to imagine an Eastern invasion of the London metropole. First published as magazine serials in 1911 and 1912, each of the works, according to Urmila Seshagiri, is "structure[d] . . . around a single, unchanging conflict: Dr. Fu-Manchu, an evil Chinese mastermind who has infiltrated modern London, plans to take over the Western world and establish a Yellow Empire" (164). Rohmer gained wide success through his calculated attempts to play on the sinophobia of a British public still smarting from the much-publicized British losses in the Second Anglo-Boer War in South Africa (1899-1902) and the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900), in which the Chinese violently laid siege to the foreign officials and merchants in Beijing (169).[80] The literary works of Shiel and Rohmer, along with others by writers such as Frank Norris and Jack London in the United States, led to a long literary and cinematic

tradition of exploiting fears of Asian imperial expansion that lasted well after the conclusion of the Second World War.

Doyle and Burnett's works, though of different genres than those discussed above, nonetheless reflect the imperial concerns evident in the reverse colonization narrative. Their settings in the heart of England do not preclude harm from the corrupting influence of empire. Throughout the Sherlock Holmes canon, Doyle continuously makes it clear that "England is protected neither by distance nor by time from the repercussions of imperial crises" (S. Harris 452). His mysteries mine colonial anxieties to create thrilling crime narratives in which his detective battles to maintain order in an England continually beset and infected by crimes originating in the imperial realm. In portraying the metropole as a body infected by imperial crime, Doyle warns the reading public that, as Susan Canon Harris phrases it, "the empire sometimes bites back" (452). In Burnett criticism, as well, there is the suggestion of contagion and corruption returning to England from the imperial hinterland. Jerry Phillips, for instance, discusses *The Secret Garden*'s negative portrayal of imperial "blowback," a phrase he borrows from "espionage jargon," to reference the "unexpected—and negative—effects at home that result from . . . operations overseas" (169). Both authors are apprehensive over the hidden costs of empire paid by English citizens, and they express that concern through the damage sustained by the vulnerable bodies of their child characters, Lucy and Mary.

The era's widespread fears of decline seem to prevent Doyle and Burnett from openly experimenting with the connections between race, color, and otherness in the

empathetic manner illustrated by the mid-Victorian writers Collins and Hardy. Instead, their fiction seems to have reverted to the anti-other stance illustrated by early Victorians such as Thackeray and Brontë, and they both borrow some of the same techniques for racial characterization, including the use of yellow. No longer secure in their empire, Doyle and Burnett express fears of imperial corruption, disease, and miscegenation. These fears result in a desire for legibility and the narrative strategy of marking difference on the body of the other. While Doyle's detective fiction is concerned with identifying the dangerous influence of the Englishman corrupted by imperial otherness, Burnett's domestic novel is focused on the rehabilitation of the white colonial body on its return to England.

The Many Meanings of Yellow

Yellow is the most diverse signifier of all the colors discussed thus far, perhaps because its discursive use has a much longer history in Western culture. Well before Blumenbach and other Enlightenment scientists used yellow to categorize groups of humans in a racial capacity, Europeans had used yellow as a marker of religious difference as far back as the medieval period. By the beginnings of the Victorian era, yellow was an established literary trope that signaled more than racial and religious difference; it also included many forms of moral corruption or physical illness perceived to derive from time spent abroad. In a discussion of the colonial characters in Brontë's fiction, Elsie Michie states that "the semes of race difference . . . are not fixed to one character but can always float from one to another" (135). I argue that yellow functions

as one of these "semes of race difference" because it is a marker of otherness that drifts from one group to another in Victorian fiction. Yellow is alternately associated with Asian, African, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, and Indian peoples, as well as non-Protestant Europeans, specifically Jews and Catholics. The color is also applied to British imperial servants whose white status is seen as corrupted by contact with other peoples and environments. In this figurative use of yellow, the discourses of color, racial politics, physical infection, and moral corruption become entangled together in polysemic signifiers of intense power.

In these racialized metaphors, yellow often functions as an midpoint on the scale between black and white, working to disassociate light-skinned others from whiteness and place them in the category of "colored." This binary construction is possible because, historically, yellow has always been considered a color, but white's status as a hue has fluctuated since the Enlightenment. From the Middle Ages through the Renaissance, both white and yellow were considered to be among the six basic colors, along with red, blue, green, and black (Pastoureau, *Blue* 121). However, with the discovery of the light spectrum, white became more than a mere color, as it was understood to be made up of the combination of all colored wavelengths. At the same time, however, the growing prominence of printing, along with progress in the visual arts, meant that in pigments (ink or paint), white was also understood as the absence of color, while black was seen to be all colors combined. The result was that in Western culture, "White is both a colour, and, at once, not a colour" (Dyer 45). In contrast, yellow not only retained its position as a basic color after the Enlightenment, but was

promoted to a primary color with Jakob Christophe Le Blon's eighteenth-century invention of color engraving, which relied on a combination of red, blue, and yellow plates (Pastoureau, *Blue* 120-1). These different views of the two colors also pertained to human skin tones. Yellow had been established as a skin color in the Comte de Buffon's *Natural History*, published in 36 volumes from 1749-88, which listed several possible skin tones to be found in the world, including "copper, purple, tawny, olive, yellow, and brown" (Wheeler 30), before it was tied more concretely to Asia in the works of Blumenbach. But while non-European peoples' skin tones were simplified to basic color terms in the service of taxonomies, European complexions shared in the exception made for white and were disassociated from the world of color. For this reason, it was far more likely for white skin to be described in complexion terms, such as pale, light, or fair, rather than color terms such as beige or tan. The result is the European positioning of a monolithic category of whiteness against the various known shades of "colored" skin; yellow was valuable to this binary because it could be assigned to whatever culture, religion, or form of hybridity needed to be othered to serve European nationalist or imperial discourses.

A good example of this flexibility in the use of yellow is its application to non-Christian Europeans. Since the Middle Ages, Europeans have attached yellow to a notion of "the East." Medieval Christians understood yellow as a dangerously foreign color because "it was often worn by such outsiders as Jews and Muslims" (Pleij 77). Because of this, the hue was the standard choice for the "marks of infamy" of the medieval sumptuary laws, in which cloth symbols or shapes were sewn onto the clothing

of non-Christians as a required form of identification (Pastoureau, *Blue* 91-94). The eastern connotations of yellow migrated from clothing to skin over the course of the centuries, most likely helped along by the early Enlightenment's investment in classification and surface difference. The designation of yellow ostensibly referred to the sun-tanned skin of different Mediterranean peoples, but actually served to mark as other those people who might otherwise be categorized as white, particularly those whose difference was cultural or religious rather than racial. By the nineteenth century, there are many literary examples of yellow skin tones being assigned to Jews, Muslims, and (in Protestant works) Catholics.

For example, George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876) is a pro-Zionist novel with a Jewish protagonist that nonetheless consistently refers to Daniel's Jewish mentor Mordecai as being yellow. Mordecai is dying of consumption, and his descriptions mix the yellow tint of diseased skin with the historical association of the color with Judaism. Eliot's text emphasizes Mordecai's "yellow pallor" (386, 495), as well as his "wasted yellow hands" (495) and "pallid yellow nostril" (503). Yet the yellow of Mordecai's skin is not solely associated with his illness, as it is extended to other Jewish characters. The elderly Mrs. Cohen, with whose family Mordecai lodges, is also described as having a "yellow face" in a description that emphasizes the dark, vaguely Eastern features of the whole family, particularly their "black" and "glisten[ing]" eyes (394). The historical connection between Judaism and the yellow markings of the old sumptuary laws is also acknowledged by the text when Deronda suggests that the singer Mirah Lapidoth (really Cohen) take a non-Jewish stage name; the narrator states, "To Deronda just now the

name Cohen was equivalent to the ugliest of yellow badges" (468). He proposes that Mirah choose an "Italian or Spanish [stage] name, as would suit your *physique.*" What he really means, of course, is a name that would suit her darker complexion and features in order to pass off her Jewish origins as Catholic ones. Eliot's novel, despite its pro-Zionist message, nonetheless indulges in cultural and religious stereotyping in its many uses of yellow, which work to transform religious difference into racial difference.

Similarly, Collins's gothic short story "The Yellow Mask," published first in *Household Words* before being collected in *After Dark* in 1856 (Griffin 56), also uses yellow as a polysemic marker of religious and racial difference. "The Yellow Mask" somewhat "iron[ically]" draws on the anti-Catholic tradition of the gothic novel to tell the story of a young widower and nobleman, Count Fabio d'Ascoli, whose superstitious nature as a Catholic leads him to believe that he is being haunted by his deceased wife, Maddalena (61). He is pursued to distraction by a figure dressed in a mask and domino in his wife's favorite shade of yellow. In reality, the greedy Brigida and the corrupt Father Rocco are plotting to scare Fabio in order to prevent his second marriage to the deserving Nanina. In this story, Collins makes an explicit connection between Brigida's corrupt Catholicism, the demonic yellow of her domino, and the yellow tone of her Mediterranean skin. For instance, when Brigida is in an embarrassing or emotional situation, rather than flushing rosy pink (as any Englishwoman would), her "swarthy cheeks . . . turned to a dull yellow" (396). In both *Daniel Deronda* and Collins's story, the yellow complexion descriptors work to identify European characters whose religion estranges them from Protestant society.

Because the color yellow served cultural constructions of otherness so well, it was also used to mark those people whose white heritage could not be questioned, but whose behavior or actions might threaten the meanings of whiteness. Yellow therefore migrated to the bodies of the British colonials living among the racial others of the empire. As M. Daphne Kutzer explains, "The yellow face as a consequence of and marker of the colonial English is common in fiction. Most of the colonial officers in *Vanity Fair*, for example, return to England with yellow faces, the mark of both physical infection and, perhaps, moral infection in the colonies" (78). In the English novel, yellow skin becomes an outward marker of the possible inward degeneration of the Englishman abroad. Such is the case in *The Secret Garden*, to be discussed in depth later, in which the little yellow Mary Lennox has degenerated both physically and morally through her time spent in British India.

Additionally, the fictional use of yellow distinguishes the foreign wealth, manners, and moral corruption of the British imperial servant returning from abroad from the English values of the members of the landed classes. For example, Sir Walter Elliot uses this technique to make class distinctions between the gentry and the newly "rich naval officers" returning from the Napoleonic Wars in Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1817). When his overspending forces Sir Walter to rent out his family estate, he soothes his own hurt feelings by insulting the complexions of the naval officers who are his potential renters. He refers to Admiral Baldwin as having a countenance "the color of mahogany, rough and ragged to the last degree" after his time spent in the tropical sun (17). Similarly, he predicts that the unknown Admiral Croft's "face [will be] about as

orange as the cuffs and capes of my livery" (18). Sir Walter's comments focus on the damage of the tropical environment on the complexion rather than the disease of Thackeray's novel, but nonetheless work to differentiate the naval officers who labor in the sun from the members of the landed gentry who do not. Like the yellow army officers of *Vanity Fair*, this example illustrates that color's divisive capacities can uphold class-based distinctions as well as racial classifications.

Last, yellow was also used by Europeans to exaggerate the extent of racial difference in the case of mixed-race individuals. In the West Indies, for instance, centuries of European imperialism had led to a complex mixing of European, Caribbean, and African bloodlines; at the same time, however, the social and political requirements of colonial life in the nineteenth century necessitated that clear racial distinctions be made. This led many Europeans to attempt to designate and fix racial identities through scientific means. As Werner Sollors explains, "Classification schemes of racial names were an eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century obsession" (113). In what Sollors describes as a "Calculus of Color" (112), Enlightenment scientists devised mathematical systems to measure and name the amount of black and white blood in a particular person: a quadroon, for instance, had a quarter black blood (or one grandparent of African descent and three European grandparents), and a octoroon had one-eighth African heritage (126-7). Yet, other classification systems, particularly those of the British, relied more explicitly on skin color over mathematics. On St. Vincent in the eighteenth century, British planters attempted to distinguish between different peoples by designating some "Yellow Caribs" and others "Black Caribs" (Hulme 185).

According to Peter Hulme, the Yellow Caribs were the supposedly indigenous peoples, while the Black Caribs were reported to be the African descendants of a shipwrecked slaving ship, sometimes in league with escaped Maroons. Although there was little cultural and linguistic difference between the two groups and the distinction was often unclear, it was necessary politically for the British "that the Black Caribs should be *seen* as distinctly African" so that they could be treated as "usurpers" of their own land (185-6). The Yellow Caribs, however, while treated more favorably, were not considered the equal of the British colonials.[81] The designation of "Yellow" helped to rank the indigenous Caribs over the African Caribs, yet still categorized them as colored, which was seen as inferior to whiteness. The color classification system was implemented to bring a sense of scientific order and hierarchical rankings to the various cultural crossings of the Caribbean, but its primary job was to maintain whiteness in its hallowed position on the top of the hierarchy.

Yellow was not just assigned to indigenous Caribs, but was also used to describe the skin tones of peoples of mixed European and African blood. Despite the complex mathematical systems of racial identification, Sollars reports that the British relied more heavily than other Europeans on the term "mulatto" to designate any mixed-race or light-skinned blacks (127). But because "mulatto," as a term that meant half-black and half-white, naturally incorporated the fact of white parentage (and therefore challenged binary distinctions between European and Other), many British descriptions of mulattos included additional, distancing signifiers. The most notable of these was yellow, perhaps because it had been established scientifically as a skin color since the

taxonomies of the mid-eighteenth century. The descriptor "yellow" became a way for the British, followed by the Americans, to acknowledge the lighter skin of mulattos without necessarily associating them with whiteness or white parentage. Still in use in the United States, the term "high yellow" or "high yeller" referred to light-skinned African-Americans; the "higher" the yellow of the skin, the closer it was to whiteness. For instance, a 1929 review of a biography of Alexandre Dumas, *père*, in *Time* magazine referred to him as the "Quadroon son of a black-mothered father," because his Haitian grandmother had mixed Caribbean and African ancestry. He was described as "blue-eyed, thick-lipped, with fairish, crisply negroid hair. His skin's yellow was so high it was almost white" ("High-Yellow Fictioneer"). The reviewer's suggestion that Dumas is almost white, but not quite, illustrates how, when the realities of interracial bloodlines threatened to challenge the binary construction of European and African, the accusation of yellowness allowed the mixed-race individuals to be moved to the category of colored and excluded from that of whiteness. This is the meaning of yellow as Doyle uses it in many of his stories, particularly "The Yellow Face," where the color suggests the presence of African blood lurking in European bloodlines.

In the art of the nineteenth century, the racial meanings of yellow soon coalesced with its aesthetics. The 1863 portrait of writer and nurse Mary Seacole not only valorizes her bravery, but also uses its composition and coloring to emphasize her mixed-race heritage. Seacole, a Jamaican of Scottish and Creole parentage, narrates her experiences as a nurse in the Crimean War in *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands*. In the text, she describes her complexion as "only a little brown—few

shades duskier than the brunettes whom you all admire so much" (4), but she also reports that the Europeans that she encountered termed her "the yellow woman from Jamaica" (27), "the yellow doctress" (34), and a "motherly yellow woman" (78). Her portrait, painted by Albert Charles Challen, emphasizes Seacole's service to England through his inclusion of the many medals attached to her costume, yet it also emphasizes the otherness of her skin color. The portrait's composition centers on the play between the three primary colors, with blue represented by her dress, red by her scarf, and yellow by her complexion. Her skin is portrayed in a range of yellow ochres and muted browns, and almost blends into her brunette hairline and the brown background. The visual representation of Seacole, like the textual one of Dumas, emphasizes her racial difference through its use of the color yellow.

In the early twentieth century, the connections among yellow pigment, complexion, and Africa became even more solidified. Modern artist Pablo Picasso directly associates the color yellow with Africa through his interest in primitivism and African objects d'art. Picasso's Black or Negro Period (1907-09, now known as his African Period), which followed his Blue (1901-04) and Rose (1904-06) Periods, is marked by his interest in a new set of tones and colors, particularly yellow.[82] The most famous work from this period is *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907), which draws on African and Iberian sculpture to create the deconstructed forms that became the basis for cubism. Yet a study from Picasso's early work on the painting illustrates his original emphasis on vibrant yellows and browns, before he settled on the warmer peaches and corals of the final painting. Similarly, a lesser-known work from the same year, *Woman*

with a Yellow Shirt, illustrates the pairing of rich brown skin with vibrant yellow clothing. Although Picasso's use of color has been largely ignored in favor of his innovative form and composition (Nochlin, "Picasso's Colors" 105), a closer study of the color of these works illustrates the color scheme as distinct from his previous periods, as well as the later "warm, floating beiges, flecked browns, and translucent grays [that] mark the palette of the Analytic Cubist period" (105). As examples of Picasso's early interaction with primitivism, "the movement in art when the Other, often black or brown, became a catalyst for modern art" (Gikandi 456),[83] the coloring of these works illustrate that for Picasso, the other was also yellow.

While Doyle makes use of yellow's ties to the other of Africa and mixed white and black ancestry in "The Yellow Face," Burnett's *The Secret Garden* references other ethnographic meanings of yellow, particularly its association with India and East Asia. It was through the writings of Friedrich Blumenbach that yellow came to be specifically aligned with Asian peoples, as he "was the first scientist to use the yellow colour as a distinctive mark of the Mongoloid race" (Kowner 127). His *On the Natural Variety of Mankind* (1795) outlined the "five principal varieties of mankind" as consisting of the "*Caucasian*, *Mongolian*, *Ethiopian*, *American*, and *Malay*" (27). Each variety was assigned a color: "white" for the Caucasian, "black" for the Ethiopian, "copper" for the American, and "tawny" for the Malay (28-9). The Mongolian race was defined first by the "colour yellow" and second by other racialized traits, including hair color and texture and the shape of the skull, face, and eyelid (28). Previous to Blumenbach and other scientists' taxonomies, seventeenth-century European painters and illustrators had

primarily portrayed the Chinese as a white race (Mellor 10-11). European writers followed suit; as Robert Markley has noted, their prose "barely registers what we have been trained to perceive as 'essential' racial differences," such as skin color and eye shape (71). After the Enlightenment scientists established their racial hierarchies, the association of Asia with yellow endured for several centuries, culminating in the xenophobic paranoia of the yellow peril.

Yellow is also associated with the cultures and religions of the East. A Golden Buddha was selected by Kaiser Wilhelm to be the icon of China in his yellow peril propaganda. It was well known that monks across Tibet and Southeast Asia wear saffron-colored robes (the actual dyes used were turmeric or jackfruit) (Finlay 224). In India, Krishna is painted wearing his traditional yellow dhoti, often rendered in brilliant Indian Yellow. This rare pigment was periodically imported into the West and sold by colormen until the end of the nineteenth century, yet the origins of Indian yellow remain in doubt today (203-17). Despite the monolithic implications of yellow in race science and yellow peril propaganda, the creative literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries illustrates that not all Asians were associated with the color in the same way. Rudyard Kipling's *Kim* (1900-01) often portrays the native Indians as black or dark-skinned, while yellow is reserved as a descriptor of the Chinese and Tibetan characters. The title character is first described to the reader as a white boy who appears as "burned black as any native" (3); his mentor, the Tibetan Lama, wears a "dirty yellow robe" and has a "face [that] was yellow and wrinkled, like that of Fook Sing, the Chinese bootmaker in the bazaar" (103, 6). Kipling uses color in a manner similar to that of the

British planters on St. Vincent in order to distinguish the Lama as a higher ranking and more civilized character than the colonized people of India. Yet the repeated references to his yellow coloring still emphasize that he is an Other who must be distinguished from whiteness.

The spread of yellow as a racial characteristic from the Asian mainland to Japan makes an interesting case study that illustrates the color's ties to racism and imperial competition. At the time of the American Commodore Perry's mission to Japan in the 1850s, Europeans and North Americans did not always associate the Japanese with the rest of the Mongol race. Just as seventeenth-century Europeans had viewed the Chinese as relatively civilized, nineteenth-century Westerners found in the newly opened Japan a cultivated and artistic society that did not fit into their notions of racial inferiority. Historian Rotem Kowner argues that this treatment of Japan as a civilized exception in a barbarous continent changes over the last half of the nineteenth century as the "objective" scientific discourse begins to reflect the changing political status of Japan. He argues,

> as long as the Japanese were perceived as culturally developed yet unthreatening politically, they were depicted [by European discourse] in vague racial terms. Once, however, they started to gain military power and push forward their own political agenda, they were given a clearly defined inferior racial character and were marked as the menacing Other. (105)

As the Japanese emerged triumphant from the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) (fought between the Japanese and Chinese over control of Korea), they seemed to be a rising imperial power. By engaging in (and, worse, succeeding in) warfare, the Japanese suddenly seemed to the Europeans to be violent, revealing themselves to have been, despite their arts and manners, "genuine members of the Mongoloid race" all along (126). With this new classification came the familiar racial stereotype of yellow skin, and Kowner notes that "Toward the end of the century, the colour yellow became almost synonymous with the Japanese, and no [Western] observer dared to depict the skin colour of the fairest maiden as white" (128). Calling the Japanese yellow revoked their special status and lumped their culture into that of the Asian continent, erasing cultural and political difference through simplified racial characteristics. Like the term "Orient," it erases individuality to form a monolithic, but clearly inferior Asian other designated as yellow. By the early twentieth century, the Japanese were included in the widespread fears of a pan-Asian threat to Europe and North American supremacy.

As the earlier discussion of yellow peril fiction suggests, the opening of Japan had a great influence on Western culture, but this influence was not always treated negatively. Western art drew heavily from the Japanese during the beginnings of modernism, with many new artistic movements, including the Arts and Crafts Movement, the Aesthetic movement, and Art Nouveau, all reinterpreting Japanese styles and motifs. Anglo-Japanese style and its French counterpart Japonisme in particular were inspired by the extremely popular Japanese woodcuts that became more widely available in the 1860s. Aesthetic artists such as James McNeill Whistler (an American

expatriate who lived in London and Paris) borrowed elements from Japanese prints and Chinese pottery to create "Oriental fantasies" (Chang 18), such as *La Princesse du Pays de la Porcelain* (*The Princess from the Land of Porcelain*). John Sandberg identifies 1865's *La Princesse* as the beginning of "Whistler's East-West synthesis" because it not only includes the Oriental dress, props, and scenery of his earlier works, but also illustrates how Whistler's "Occidental manner has begun to absorb Japanese concepts of space and decoration" (504). Although Whistler's painting does not make use of his stated favorite color, a bright egg-yolk yellow (Forward 300), it does employ warm tones and ochres, which extend to the model (Whistler's mistress Jo Hiffernan) and make her Irish complexion appear as golden as Kaiser Wilhelm's propaganda Buddha.[84] This connection between yellow coloring and Japonisme is further emphasized by the later appearance of Camille Saint-Saëns's *La Princesse Jaune* (1872), a French comic opera set in Japan that replaced Whistler's reference to porcelain, seen as a characteristic Chinese export, with the French adjective "*jaune*," or yellow, to reference what was viewed as a characteristic Asian racial trait. Although the Anglo-Japanese and Japonisme movements tended to oversimplify Asian peoples and their complexions, the artists were also genuinely interested in the aesthetic qualities of yellow in art, fashion, and décor.

Many other Aesthetic artists also embraced Japanese woodblock prints to create a new Anglo-Japanese style. For instance, illustrator Aubrey Beardsley's work built on the tradition of the Japanese grotesque and helped to define the aesthetics of the 1890s and Art Nouveau (Zatlin 87). Beardsley's new hybrid style was widely disseminated

through his work as the art editor of *The Yellow Book*, "that most defining of 1890s periodicals" (Hughes 849). Koenraad Claes and Marysa Demoor argue that the prominent and "(in)famous" magazine served as "the unofficial platform of this [Aesthetic-Decadent] generation of artists" (134, 137). The name *The Yellow Book* derives from the French practice of wrapping books of disrepute in a telltale yellow paper. This practice became associated with the Aesthetic Movement through Oscar Wilde's reference to Dorian's corrupting book (supposedly Joris-Karl Huysmans's *À Rebours*) "bound in yellow paper" in the 1891 novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (122); furthermore, Wilde himself was supposedly holding a yellow-backed novel in his hand at the moment of his arrest for "gross indecency" (Hughes 856). The Aesthetic-Decadent embrace of the aesthetics and symbolism of yellow resulted in the entire decade becoming "associated in the popular mind with a single colour, yellow" (Claes and Demoor 133).

The widespread association of yellow with Asian-inspired art and Aestheticism also had a gendered aspect, as the color was also associated with the New Woman. As Linda K. Hughes illustrates, while *The Yellow Book* did not always maintain an equitable division between male and female writers, it did "provide an outlet by which women writers could challenge social convention or misogynist contributions by men" (863). Furthermore, *Yellow Book* publisher John Lane also printed many New Woman novels in his Keynote series, which was inaugurated by the work of George Egerton (Ledger 5). This New Woman fiction often played up the connection between feminism and the color yellow, particularly in the short stories "The Yellow Wallpaper" by American

Charlotte Perkins Gilman and "The Yellow Drawing-Room" by the English Mona Caird, both published in 1892. Caird's story, written prior to the publication of Gilman's, draws on the symbolism of yellow in the 1890s as representative of "all that was bizarre and queer in art and life" to portray the battle of wills between the male protagonist, Mr. St. Vincent, and his love interest and New Woman Vanora Hayden as a struggle over Vanora's right to redecorate the drawing room in a brilliant yellow (qtd. in Forward 300). Stephanie Forward explains that Caird's yellow not only symbolizes the "outrageously modern," but is also a "manifestation of Vanora's . . . refusal to submit to male domination." The popularity of "the yellow lady novelists" may have influenced Doyle's association of yellowness with the Hebron women in his story, published the following year (Forward 300). Similarly, Burnett is known to have been in London early in 1892 and is therefore likely to have been familiar with the genre; in fact, the divorced Burnett, though somewhat older and more "Victorian" than the typical New Woman, "serve[d] as a model for them" through her literary career and "independent life" (Gerzina, *Frances Hodgson Burnett* 184).

The representations of the little yellow girls of Doyle's and Burnett's fiction combines the artistic, gendered, and above all, racial meanings of yellow in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although the two works connect yellowness to different parts of the globe ("The Yellow Face" with the Americas and *The Secret Garden* with India), both writers are concerned with the negative consequences of the British Empire and its engagement with racial others. As a result, the two texts insistently associate color with otherness in a manner that reflects their authors', and the

fin de siècle's, preoccupations with imperial corruption, foreign disease, miscegenation, and racial legibility.

"The Yellow Face"

Arthur Conan Doyle's dependence on color as a literary signifier is visible throughout the Sherlock Holmes canon. Although he was not an artist himself, Doyle came from a long line of artists. His grandfather, John Doyle, was a political caricaturist, well known in London under the name of H. B. His father, Charles Altamont Doyle, was the youngest of four boys, all of whom had artistic inclinations: James became an illustrator, Richard was a cartoonist for *Punch*, and Henry was "the manager of the National Gallery in Dublin" (Doyle, *Memories* 8). As the youngest, Charles was forced to support himself by taking a place in the Office of Works in Edinburgh, but he also worked as an illustrator to supplement his modest income and support his ever-growing family.[85] Despite his family's artistic background, Arthur Conan Doyle was not given a chance to study art himself. While art was becoming a common subject in public schools by the 1860s and '70s (Bermingham 233-35), Doyle was educated at a series of strict Jesuit schools that favored classical methods of instruction. This training was followed by his enrollment in the University of Edinburgh where he studied medicine while working in order to support his younger siblings. In a way, Doyle's education reflects the larger shift in the history of artistic instruction, where, somewhat paradoxically, the more widely available instruction in the arts became, the more devalued it was as "social practice" and means of class differentiation

(Bermingham 246). With the institutionalization of drawing instruction and the establishment of the government Schools of Design for artisans (229-35), the middle and upper classes increasingly turned to scientific and professional knowledge, which replaced the previous elitism associated with artistic accomplishments throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This cultural transformation is aptly expressed in Doyle's literary works, as his characters are often scientific professionals who represent the future of an increasingly industrialized and modern society.

Yet while his characters usher in the modern era, Doyle's prose is suffused with the discourses of the visual arts in a manner that is still very Victorian. His work reflects the cultural prestige of art and the "painter-hero" in the early nineteenth century that his father and uncles enjoyed and that led some Victorian writers (especially Collins and Hardy) to attempt to incorporate the lexicon and techniques of painting into the form of fiction (Losano 5-7). This Victorian engagement with the arts is visible in the character of Sherlock Holmes. While he is a professional detective and an amateur scientist, Holmes is "at the same time something of an artiste . . . [in that] he regards his métier as an art" (Siddiqi 27). Furthermore, Holmes, like Doyle, claims to have "art in the blood" (Doyle, *Sherlock* 1: 596).[86] In "The Greek Interpreter," Holmes declares that his "faculty for observation," as Watson phrases it, "may have come with [from] my grandmother, who was the sister of Vernet, the French artist" (1: 596). Doyle's familiarity with the technologies of artistic color is established by Holmes's own "research into the coal-tar derivatives" (the recently discovered source of the new aniline dyes and artificial colors that became widely available in the last quarter of the century)

in “The Adventure of the Empty House” (1: 671). In “The Adventure of the Retired Colourman,” a manufacturer and distributor of artists’ colors uses the chemical composition of fresh paint to cover up the smell of the gas used to poison his wife and her supposed lover. Doyle’s interest in color is also visible in the naming conventions of his stories. From the first Holmes narrative, *A Study in Scarlet* (whose name derives from the Aesthetic movement and work of tonal artists such as Whistler) to this chapter’s focus “The Yellow Face,” the titles of Doyle’s mysteries often illustrate a dependence on colorful adjectives. Among his works are “The Red-headed League,” “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle,” “Silver Blaze,” “The Adventure of Black Peter,” “The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez,” and “The Adventure of the Red Circle.”

Yet, although Doyle draws on his family background in the visual arts to incorporate color into his narratives, he makes use of this color somewhat differently than the artist-authors discussed in previous chapters. His medical and scientific training lead him more often to situate color within a discussion of the body, as a sign to be read in the medical diagnosis of health. For this reason, color is a prominent descriptor in his mysteries meant to allow the detective and the reader to categorize and label characters through their bodies, as well as identify any hidden but potentially dangerous foreign influences. However, the stories are not just concerned with the dangers of infection posed to the individual body, but also to the body politic. Specifically, Doyle’s color descriptors cluster around racial others, drawing not just on medical discourse, but also on that of race science. Like many scientists of his day, Doyle treats color as an

accepted sign of difference rather than, like Hardy or Collins, as a potential area for creative exploration. The color descriptors, though affecting to be imaginative visuals in the vein of realist description, actually serve as cultural shorthand to communicate potential dangers from foreign races working to infect the white population of Britain.

Most often, the dangers that Holmes works to identify are those of empire. In *Anxieties of Empire and the Fiction of Intrigue,* Yumna Siddiqi explains that the figure of the detective hero begins to emerge during the Victorian period because he is "uniquely qualified to contend with the mysteries and dangers that originate in the imperial world" (18). She writes that while Sherlock Holmes "acts within national borders . . . [he] frequently exerts his talents to solve mysteries that originate without—he demystifies alien incursions and thus renders the national space secure" (18). The new figure of the detective hero draws on emerging scientific discourses such as race science to locate the signs of foreignness on the body in a systematic and, therefore, legible manner.

The difficulty, of course, is not in identifying foreigners, but in identifying the potential dangers hidden in supposedly white bodies. Work in the nascent discipline of what is now Criminal Anthropology promised to make white criminality legible; Cesare Lombroso's *Criminal Man* (1876) outlined several "stigmata," or physical signs from sloping foreheads to excessively long arms, that marked on the exterior of the body the dangerous criminal tendencies lurking within. Other discourses worked to identify the damages of empire on the once-healthy white bodies. The medical and scientific discourses of late imperialism—degeneration, decadence, and atavism—reveal the vast

emphasis placed on the role of the white body in empire, as well as on the paradoxical requirements of that body. Siddiqi explains, "On the one hand, the European body was invested with symbols of power of a ruling race—in the body's coloring, shape, and vestments . . . However, Europeans were [also] acutely aware of the weakness and vulnerability of their bodies. Influenced by theories of degeneration that were popular in the late Victorian period, English people believed that imperial location had harmful effects upon European bodies" (78). This anxiety is evidenced by the fact that "imperial fiction is replete with bodies that are unstable and fragile—bodies that change color, that shrink, that bleed and bend and break" (78).

Bodies, of course, are narrator Dr. Watson's territory; while Holmes provides the methods to what is termed "The Science of Deduction" (Doyle, *Sherlock* 1: 9), Watson provides the medical knowledge necessary to diagnose the foreign. The increasing social and imperial problems of the late Victorian era led to what Holmes terms a "medico-criminal" discourse (2: 388). Critic Maria Cairney argues that during the period, "crime—through a series of diverse metaphorical associations—became linked to disease" (67). As a result, there was increasing "slippage between 'criminal' and 'patient' and, by extension, 'doctor' and 'detective'" (63). Treating the crimes of the body politic required the medical expertise of someone like Dr. Watson. The literary combination of the scientist Holmes and medical man Watson is designed to be especially reassuring to Doyle's fin de siècle readers because not only can the two characters together demystify the racial origins of a foreign or colonial other, they can

also read the signs of imperial corruption in the white European who has been abroad in the realm of empire.

The belief that white bodies carry the signs of the ravages of empire is illustrated in Dr. Watson's own experience; he is a returned colonial, and his body is marred both by the injuries he received in the Afghan War and by the diseases he contracted. Furthermore, he carries the marking of his time abroad in his complexion, which has been darkened through his exposure to the Afghan sun (he is described as "brown as a nut") (Doyle, *Sherlock* 1: 4). Watson embodies what Siddiqi identifies as the text's "preoccupation not only with health and disease, but with skin color, arguably the most salient of racial markers in the late nineteenth century" (83). Watson, like the other returned colonials he describes, is himself of "questionable whiteness" in the beginning of the series (83). One of the primary functions of the detective throughout the series is to expose any foreignness that might be lurking underneath the surface appearance of whiteness. This is established in the first Holmes mystery, *A Study in Scarlet*, in which Holmes easily deduces Dr. Watson's involvement in colonial warfare within seconds of their introduction: "You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive" are among the first words Holmes ever says to Watson (1: 7). Although Holmes's scientific knowledge allows him to read the origin and experiences of bodies, it is the narrator Dr. Watson, who, in imitating and recording Holmes's "Science of Deduction," continues to describe and diagnose the majority of the imperial characters for the reader over the course of the series. Watson's narratives illustrate a "consistent pattern of representation" of physical

markings and disability that make sure that returned colonials, like other foreign characters, are "racially coded as 'Other'" (Siddiqi 63, 83).

Color is one of the foremost signifiers of otherness in Doyle's "pattern of representation," working to separate the returned colonial or foreigner from the category of whiteness. Yellow skin, in particular, is often used to mark on the surface of the body the internal corruption of life abroad through descriptions that tie Watson's eye for medical diagnosis to a particularly literary system of expression that relies on color for its descriptive abilities and symbolic meanings. The role of Holmes and Watson as racial detectives who read the colorful clues of the body is exemplified, and somewhat complicated, by the short mystery "The Yellow Face."

The story begins when a distraught Grant Munro visits Holmes and Watson at their apartment in Baker Street. Munro is worried because Effie, his wife of three years, has been acting strangely, spending large sums of money without explanation and slipping out of the house in the middle of the night. He has reason to suspect that she has been visiting a cottage, recently rented, near their country house in Norbury. Munro has seen a grotesque face, strangely colored and unnaturally rigid, looking out of an upper window of the cottage, but has not been able to catch sight of the new tenants, even when he bursts into the house unannounced. Effie is a widow, having lived in the American South, where she reportedly lost her first husband and child to yellow fever before returning to her native England. Holmes suspects that Effie's first husband is still living and threatening to reveal that her second marriage to Munro is invalid. However, on traveling to Norbury, they find Munro determined again to forcibly enter the cottage,

and before any investigation can be made, Holmes and Watson are left to follow in Munro's wake as he pushes past Effie and enters the cottage. Once upstairs, the three men find the room occupied by a little black girl named Lucy. Effie explains that after her first husband, an African-American named John Hebron, died from yellow fever, she decided to return home to England. Their child Lucy, having contracted the illness, had been too weak to travel and was left behind in Atlanta to recuperate. Once in England, Effie met and fell in love with Grant Munro, but she was afraid to tell him of the existence of her mixed-race child. After a few years, Effie longed to see Lucy and brought her over in the care of the Scottish nurse, having the two rent the cottage nearby so as to appear unconnected to the Munro household. As an added precaution, Effie had the nurse keep Lucy inside and covered with a mask and gloves so that people "should not gossip about there being a black child in the neighborhood" (1: 493). Munro is at first surprised by the discovery and Effie's explanation, but quickly recovers himself. In answer to Effie's fears about Lucy's future, Munro picks the child up to take her home and replies, "I am not a very good man, Effie, but I think I am a better one than you have given me credit for being" (1: 493). Holmes and Watson leave the new family to themselves and quietly depart, having discovered that no crime has been committed.[87]

Perhaps because of this lack of a criminal element, this Holmes story is not very popular, and little criticism has been written about it. The criticism that does exist is quick to point out that this is a story about failed detection. Watson introduces the story as one of Holmes's few failures, in which the truth is discovered in spite of the detective rather than because of his efforts (Holmes and Watson have no opportunity to gather

clues before Munro impulsively breaks into the cottage). Furthermore, Holmes's supposition about the blackmailing first husband is shown to have been incorrect from the first; even Watson had protested that Holmes's theory "was all surmise" (1: 490). At the conclusion of the case, Holmes says to Watson: "If it should ever strike you that I am getting a little overconfident in my powers, or giving less pains to a case than it deserves, kindly whisper 'Norbury' in my ear, and I shall be infinitely obliged to you" (1: 493). Critics seem unsure what to make of this failure; Henry Cuningham explains the limitations of the story's plotting and mystery as the price of the story's primary purpose "as a vehicle for delivering a didactic message on racial attitudes" (113). Jinny Huh, on the other hand, argues that Holmes's "failure of racial detection" represents the author's own confusion about the "complexities of the racial politics" at the end of the nineteenth century (566). Huh believes that "The Yellow Face" rewrites Doyle's own encounter with Henry Highland Garnet, a well-educated former slave who served as the American consul in Monrovia, which resulted in what she calls the complete "breakdown of Doyle's epistomelogical foundations of race" (566). Although these critics approach "The Yellow Face" from opposing points of view, together their work isolates some of the vagaries and uncertainties of the text on the topic of race. Doyle's supposedly happy ending, in which the racial other is accepted into the fold of the English family, is marred by his own discomfort with Lucy's mixed-race parentage. This discomfort is most easily visible in the text's use of color, which marks Lucy as other well before her appearance in the mystery's dénouement.

The most prominent example of this use of color is the title itself, which promises a colored other before the story even begins. This title, however, is also one of the unexplained mysteries of the text, as there is very little in the story's text to support this reference to yellow. Although the final revelation of a child wearing a mask serves to explain the unnatural and rigid appearance of the mysterious face in the window, it does not explain the suggestion of yellowness. As Jinny Huh asks, "Why does the title focus on a 'yellow' face rather than the 'livid white' one described in the story?" (570). In telling his predicament to Holmes and Watson, Grant Munro first states that the face that he views in the window is "a livid chalky white" (Doyle, *Sherlock* 1: 483). Watson later confirms this description, also depicting the appearance of the girl in the mask as being "of the strangest livid tint" (491). Livid itself is not a specific color, and is usually used to suggest paleness (as if the blood has drained from the face in a physical reaction to an emotional stimulus, particularly rage). When used in conjunction with color adjectives, it is frequently aligned with a "bluish leaden colour," such as one might find in a bruise, but can also modify other color terms from purple to red ("Livid," def. a).[88]

The actual use of the color yellow to describe the face only occurs once in the narrative, when Munro reports his second viewing of the face in the window. After being confronted by Effie in an attempt to enter the neighboring cottage, he allows her to lead him away. However, glancing back, he notes "there was that yellow livid face watching us out of the upper window" (486). After this passing mention, which affixes the new word "yellow" to the previously used "livid," there is a no further reference to explain the yellow coloring. Lucy herself has dark skin, as Watson portrays her as a

"coal-black negress" (491). More confusingly, the mask itself is not described in the text. The reader knows only that when "Holmes, with a laugh, passed his hand behind the child's ear, a mask peeled off from her countenance" (491). Because Lucy is said to be wearing "long white gloves" (491), and Munro describes the masked face as being "livid chalky white" (483), it seems reasonable to assume that the mask itself was meant to be white in color to assist the child in passing. However, if Lucy is "coal-black" and the mask gives the appearance of "chalky white," what role does the "yellow" adjective of the title play? The connections between the mask's color, the child's color, and Munro's descriptions are vague at best.

What is obvious, however, is that great emphasis is placed on color and its signifiers within the story. Munro first introduces the face in the window by declaring that "its colour was what had impressed me most" (1: 483). This reference to this color, which is next revealed to be the "livid chalky white," is particularly interesting because white was not always considered a color at this time. Instead, Munro's reference to face's "colour" in Doyle's story prefigures the upcoming reference to its yellow appearance, and serves suggest the presence of a non-white or "colored" person. Munro's introduction of the concept of color hints at the racial connotations of the solution from the beginning of the narrative, just as the title introduces the idea of yellowness into the mind of the reader before the story even begins.

This emphasis on color not only suggests the presence of racial otherness, it also introduces some much-needed suspense to the story. Munro describes the face as able to "send a chill right down my back" (1: 483), and after he leaves Baker Street, Holmes

confesses to Watson, "There is something very attractive about that livid face at the window" (1: 489). This interest resides in two related sensational details: Munro's portrayal of the face's eerie appearance and color. First, the story plays with the sensational possibilities of the "inhuman" appearance of the face of the "creature" face at the window (1: 483, 486). Munro asserts in his narrative that there was "something set and rigid about it which was shockingly unnatural" (1: 483). Although these descriptors bring the thrill of the supernatural to the story, in the end, they can be justified by Doyle as realistic because the mask itself is not natural, but rather crafted or manufactured, which could result in an inflexible and unsettling appearance. Yet the signifiers have already done their damage because the signifiers "creature," "unnatural," and "inhuman" have already implied the presence of a racial other. Black skin was often considered "unnatural" deviance from the white norm in nineteenth-century Britain, allowing black people to be thought of as less than human by Europeans. Similarly, the strange color references, while revealed in the conclusion as applying to the mask rather than Lucy's actual face, also carry the same double meanings. The yellow face is presented as supernatural in the same manner as Brontë's descriptions of Bertha as a purple ghost or Hardy's treatment of Diggory Venn as a red devil, with a secondary implication of racial difference. The text effectively cloaks its racialized use of color in the topoi of supernatural descriptors, which are explained away in the conclusion.

Yet there remain some unresolved problems with this narrative strategy. While Doyle takes care to use the rational techniques of scientific investigation to nullify the supernatural aspects of the mystery,[89] a mask alone cannot justify all the signifiers

attached to the fantastic face. In the end, the solution cannot account for the face's description as yellow because, unlike its unnatural shape and appearance, there is no logical reason why the mask should be yellow if the mother is attempting to pass the child of as white. Huh offers the explanation that this unexplained use of yellow is not an "error," but a "critical and useful slippage" that allows Doyle to first suggest, then disavow, the many meanings of his yellow references (570). At the very least, the repeated use of "yellow" reveals that, despite the successful conclusion of the mystery, its solution in the person of a half black and half white child may be, in Victorian eyes, more frightening than the supernatural alternative. Regardless of Munro's acceptance of Lucy, the text is deeply uncomfortable with her mixed heritage; this fact becomes more apparent when one looks at Doyle's other uses of the color yellow within the Holmes canon.

Doyle frequently uses the color yellow as a textual sign for otherness throughout his fiction, using it to point to criminality, foreign corruption or disease, and miscegenation. For example, the escaped convict and murderer Selden in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is described as possessing "an evil yellow face" (Doyle, *Sherlock* 2: 85). Watson's descriptions align Selden with the discourses of atavism and degeneration, as the criminal is compared to both a "savage animal" and the ancient "savages" whose ruins are scattered across the moors of Devonshire (2: 85). Selden is English, but it is more common for Doyle to use yellow to signify some form of otherness that comes from abroad. In "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," the murderous Dr. Grimesby Roylott, who has practiced medicine abroad in India, has a face "seared with a thousand

wrinkles, burned yellow with the sun," as well as "bile-shot eyes" (1: 356). Harris points out that "the villainous Dr. Roylott is persistently and relentlessly Orientalized; Doyle burdens him with a load of signifiers that are 'in excess of the requirements for the solution' of the mystery" (13). The crippled Henry Wood of "The Crooked Man," who has also served in India, is described similarly, as he possesses "yellow-shot, bilious eyes" and a "worn and swarthy face" that is "all crinkled and puckered like a withered apple" (1: 574, 572). He is, on the strength of this corrupted appearance, the lead suspect in the mystery until Holmes discovers that Colonel Barclay died of natural causes and that he is the true villain who had betrayed Wood into the hands of the rebels during the Indian Mutiny. Although the victim is revealed to be the villain and vice versa, the story illustrates that Holmes's true job is to uncover the threads of long-past crimes that originated not in England, but in the colonial experience of the east.

Throughout the Holmes canon, yellow is also used to signal one of the most dangerous forms of imperial corruption: opium use. Narratives of opium use combine the discourses of criminality and medicine, as the drug was often seen as a disease or epidemic spreading to the West from the East. In "The Man with the Twisted Lip," Doyle portrays an English opium user, Isa Whitney, as having a "yellow, pasty face," a detail that critics have noted is heavily "racialize[d]" (S. Harris 455). The connections between yellowness, drug use, and eastern corruption were fairly common as literary tropes at the fin de siècle. Cairney has made an extensive study of the fiction published alongside the Sherlock Holmes mysteries in the *Strand Magazine*, contending that "The *Strand* texts, among others in this period, register a fascination with the figure of the

opium eater, and they portray him as a carrier of a threateningly orientalized and contagious criminality" (65). This "orientalization" is indicated through the signifier of yellow skin, a detail that combines the emphasis on external signs and symptoms of medical diagnosis with the common linking of Asian peoples with yellow skin. As Cairney argues, these fictional "opium users became racially transformed, even contaminated, through their drug use" (66).

However, Doyle does not reserve yellow simply to mark corruption in the white body; he also frequently makes use of the color to suggest the corruption of white blood with that of the other. In other words, Doyle draws on the association of yellowness with the mulatto in the Americas to suggest the dangers of miscegenation. In "The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge," the police arrest a yellowish "half-breed" of South American origins (2: 297); Watson and Holmes refer to him as the "mulatto cook" (2: 320). While it turns out that the mulatto cook is not the actual murderer, it is revealed that he was part of a conspiracy to commit murder; he and his confederates were tracking down an escaped South American dictator to exact their revenge when the dictator, the "Tiger of San Pedro," struck at them first, killing the mulatto's compatriot Garcia (2: 316).[90] The mulatto cook is portrayed as an easy target for the police because his physical traits are so pronounced and unique. A newspaper article reporting his arrest reads, "It was certain from the first, however, that they [the conspirators] would eventually be detected, as the cook . . . was a man of most remarkable appearance—being a huge and hideous mulatto, with yellowish features of a pronounced negroid type" (2: 309). The mulatto cook, with his mixed African and European heritage, is the

least favorably depicted of all of Garcia's South American gang. He is dim-witted and lumbering, as well as superstitious through his ties to African religion. This superstition also leads to his easy capture, as he returns to the scene of the crime to retrieve his voodoo fetish. His criminality is racialized through the representation of his superstition and the marking of difference on the surface of his body.

The links between criminality, mixed blood, and external coloring are also exemplified in Doyle's popular 1883 short story "J. Habakuk Jephson's Statement," which gives a fictional account of the events on board the "ghost ship" *Mary Celeste*, found abandoned in the Atlantic in 1872. In Doyle's explanation, Septimus Goring, a mulatto from New Orleans, leads a mutiny of the black sailors, murders the white officers and passengers (with the exception of sole survivor and narrator Jephson), and commandeers the ship for the West African coast, where he hopes to become leader of his own tribe. The "loathsome half-breed" Goring is motivated by his desire for revenge against the white race for the murder of his enslaved black mother by her white owner (109). Goring's appearance, as described by Jephson, illustrates the "strong dash of negro blood in him," but it also "showed the white strain" through "his curved, aquiline nose and straight lank hair" (88). The most powerful sign of his mixed heritage appears, however, in his complexion, which is "of a sickly, unhealthy yellow" and "deeply pitted with small-pox" (88). The emphasis on Goring's diseased appearance causes a physical disgust in Jephson, who initially finds him "almost revolting" (88). Jephson's description of Goring contains all the clues necessary for the reader to identify Goring as the murderer well before the events are recounted. The implication is that if only

Jephson or the captain had had the ability to read the moral corruption evident in Goring's yellow appearance in the same manner as Holmes and Watson, the tragic events of the journey might have been prevented. Goring's immorality is presented, in part, as a result of his mixed heritage, with his superior white brain providing the cunning that supports the machinations of his morally degenerate black side. In the story, the mixed-race Goring is presented as far more dangerous than the American Negroes aboard ship and the West Africans, both of whom Goring easily manipulates. In both examples, the mulatto cook and Septimus Goring, Doyle draws on the American tradition of marking mixed heritage on the surface of the body, but extends the meanings of yellow to include criminality.

Although the mystery of "The Yellow Face" appears to reverse the common prejudice against the African-American through its sympathetic treatment of Lucy and her father John Hebron, it still relies on the same patterns of description and textual signifiers as "J. Habakuk Jephson's Statement." The description of John Hebron is racially coded both through his name (Hebron is a Palestinian city sacred to both Judaism and Islam) and his physical appearance. Like Septimus Goring, Hebron is from the American south, a region that Doyle repeatedly portrays as a colonial space throughout his fiction due to its mixture of European, Native, and African peoples.[91] Both characters are both intelligent and well educated, as Hebron is a successful lawyer who left Effie a small fortune and Goring is a "man of decided culture and refinement" ("Habakuk" 92). Most important, however, is that both men's racial origins can be easily read on their bodies. When Watson is shown Hebron's photograph, he describes

him to the reader as "strikingly handsome and intelligent-looking, but bearing unmistakable signs upon his features of his African descent" (1: 492). As he had in Goring's description, Doyle relies on a combination of physical traits and coloring to communicate racial difference in his narrative.

Unlike Goring and Lucy, however, Hebron is not directly connected to yellowness. This may be a consequence of the nature of black and white photography, but it seems more likely that Hebron was imagined to be solely of African descent. The use of yellow is reserved for the mulatto, and therefore is attached to Lucy, who receives far harsher treatment in her characterization than her father and is also closely aligned textually with Goring. While Hebron is "strikingly handsome and intelligent-looking," Lucy is portrayed as a grinning buffoon in the minstrel show tradition. Watson describes the surprising moment of her unmasking thus: "there was a little coal-black negress, with all her white teeth flashing in amusement at our amazed faces. I burst out laughing, out of sympathy with her merriment" (1: 491-92). Watson's laughing response to the clown-like Lucy undermines any threat posed by her intelligence or agency, but it also emphasizes the racialized contrast of her white teeth against her black complexion. Goring, too, is described as a having a "sensuous mouth, and gleaming teeth [that] told of his African origins" ("Habukuk" 88). Similarly, Doyle's narrator calls Goring "unnatural" (113), an adjective that also floats around Lucy, though it is seemingly attached to her masked appearance rather than her person. Most important, however, is the reliance on yellow to suggest Lucy's origins, a reference that frames the entire narrative by appearing in the title. In sharing the same complexion and racialized

signifiers as the "loathsome half-breed" Goring and the "hideous mulatto" cook of "The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge" ("Habakuk" 109; *Sherlock* 2: 309), Lucy is obviously not in good company.

More negative African signifiers seem to be assigned to Lucy than to her father because it is she who represents the danger of miscegenation. Hebron is dead and no longer a threat to the English gene pool, while Lucy will live to grow up and reproduce (conceivably with a white man as there is no indication that the Munros have plans to leave England). Though Doyle attempts a positive representation of a mixed-race family, his discomfort with Lucy's heritage is illustrated by his overloading the child with color signifiers: in his haste to distance Lucy from whiteness, he assigns her the double, and contradictory, signifiers of "coal-black" and "yellow." In the first, Doyle avoids any possibility that Lucy can escape Watson and Holmes's racial detection and pass for white by depicting her with what Huh terms a "hyberbolic blackness" (570). In the story, Lucy is depicted as darker than her father despite her mother's Anglo-Saxon genetic contributions; Effie unconvincingly claims, "It was our misfortune that our only child took after his [Hebron's] people rather than mine. It is often so in such matches, and little Lucy is darker far than ever her father was" (Doyle, *Sherlock* 1: 492). Doyle's reluctance to acknowledge Lucy's white heredity here is uncharacteristic, as he has previously portrayed the mixture of white and black blood in other characters. The constable who witnesses the mulatto cook peering in the window (in a scene eerily familiar to the image of Lucy looking out at Munro[92]) stresses the exact color of the cook's face in his report. He says, "It wasn't black, sir, nor was it white, nor any colour

that I know, but a kind of queer shade like clay with a splash of milk in it" (2: 306). This vivid sketch of the mulatto cook's appearance portrays the mixing of white and black genes in the same manner as one might describe mixing recipe ingredients or even paints. Yet while Lucy is given the same significant yellow indicators as the mulatto cook, Doyle seems unwilling to portray the "splash of milk" that one would expect in Lucy's complexion. Instead, he overloads her with signifiers of difference that deny her whiteness, by splitting up the racialized signifiers between her complexion (black) and her appearance in the mask (yellow). The device of the mask makes literal the established cultural conventions regarding the mixing of black and white heredity, as the layering of a (presumably) white mask over Lucy's black skin results in a yellow appearance that is never applied directly to Lucy herself. By displacing Lucy's yellowness, the sign of her hybridity, onto the mask, Doyle can associate her with the criminal contagion of his other murderous mulattos without having to provide any unsettling visual indications of her white genes when she finally appears at the conclusion of the story. This dual strategy allows the title and descriptions of the masked face to raise the specter of miscegenation and the cunning mulatto, while Lucy herself may be reassuringly portrayed as a simple "negress" (1: 491), both less threatening and more knowable, easily detected by even the unpracticed eye.

Significantly, the hybrid meanings of yellow migrate throughout the story between Lucy and her mother, the transmitter of racially suspect genes. It is not a coincidence that the only direct association of the masked face with yellow, Munro's second description of "that yellow livid face watching us [him and Effie] out of the

upper window," is followed immediately by his anxious question, "What link could there be between that creature and my wife?" (1: 486). Though the hereditary link between Effie and Lucy has yet to be revealed at this point in the mystery, these references demonstrate Doyle's underlying distaste over the biological realities of miscegenation that results in his portrayal of Effie as "sexually associated with and contaminated by blackness" (Huh 569). This contamination, however, is portrayed not only through dark imagery to indicate her carnal connection with blackness, but also through yellow imagery as the indicator of Effie's role as progenitor of mixed race offspring. For instance, when Holmes and Watson arrive with Munro to the cottage to begin their investigation, the candlelight within creates the image of "a yellow bar falling across the black foreground" of the building's entrance (1: 491). As Munro and the detectives approach, Effie steps out of the door to bar the party from entering the cottage; Watson states that she "appeared out of the shadow and stood in the golden track of the lamplight." In this scene, the light falls on Effie's body, making her appear yellow. As the natural mother of the mixed-race Lucy, she has become by implication yellow herself. Yet Watson also states that her face could not be seen in the darkness, associating her with blackness. Interestingly, no description of Effie's features is given at all. Effie, therefore, while designated by the text as English, possesses no complexion, hair color, or bodily indicators of her whiteness. In essence, Effie is denied whiteness and has become a racial other herself through the transfer of the colored signifiers of difference from the daughter to the mother who bore her. When situated within late Victorian concerns over the possible enervation of the white races and

masculine fears that other racial groups may prove to be more potent than Europeans, the color motifs associated with Lucy and Effie indicate Doyle's own discomfort with the role of women as the transmitters of the white race in general and Effie's violation of the purity of her English lineage in particular.[93]

The last significant feature of the racial characterization to be discussed is Doyle's association of yellowness with tropical disease. While in Atlanta, both Lucy and John Hebron are afflicted with yellow fever; John dies of the disease while Lucy is so weak upon her recovery that she must be left in America when Effie returns to England. Yellow fever is a viral infection spread by mosquitoes and is endemic to the tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas and Africa; it gets its name from its effect on the liver, which can cause jaundice and a yellowed complexion. Doyle's oblique reference to the yellow face at the window may not only reference Lucy's mixed heritage, but also the history of her illness and the possibility of contagion. In combining these meanings, Doyle builds on a common nineteenth-century literary tradition.

By the beginnings of the Victorian era, it was an established trope to associate yellow with foreign contagion. In Brontë's 1849 novel *Shirley*, cholera is characterized as "the yellow taint of pestilence, covering white Western isles with the poisoned exhalations of the East, dimming the lattices of English homes with the breath of the Indian plague" (399). This quotation exemplifies the ways in which disease is racialized through the opposition of the vaguely Eastern "yellow" and the "white Western isle," as well as the Indian plague and the healthy English home. In Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*,

published in 1848, Joseph Sedley, a tax collector in the East India Company's Civil Service, also possesses a "yellow face" as result of "liver complaint" caught in Boggley Wollah (17, 19). Similarly, George Osborne and William Dobbin each return from military service in the West Indies with a "yellow face"; according to Osborne, Dobbin's complexion is far more yellow than his own because Dobbin had "the yellow fever three times; twice at Nassau, and once at St. Kitts" (46). Yet Miss Swartz, the "rich woolly-haired mulatto from St. Kitts" (4), is also associated with the color yellow; though her complexion is more often described as "mahogany" (a reddish-brown wood common to the West Indies),[94] Osborne makes fun of her ostentatious dress as full of "diamonds as big as pigeons' eggs" and "a yellow satin train that streeled after her like the tail of a comet" (199-200). Thackeray presents the tropical environment of St. Kitts as the common factor between the yellow disease of the British officers and racial markers of the "mulatto." As in Brontë's and Thackeray's works, Doyle's reference to yellow conflates Lucy's American origins in a subtropical environment, her mixed racial heritage, and her history of illness. Notably, the English Effie is the only member of the family not to be afflicted with yellow fever, despite what we might presume to be her relative lack of immunity to New World diseases. Instead, tropical diseases are associated with the natives of the tropics, a plot point that fancifully and wistfully rewrites the more common experience of indigenous immunity while white colonials suffer heavy losses.

Other mysteries in the Holmes canon also associate foreign disease with yellowness, extending the symptoms of yellow fever, and liver complaints in general, to

the larger category of tropical disease. In "The Dying Detective," Watson is led to believe that Holmes has contracted an "Eastern" disease while investigating a mystery "among the Chinese sailors down at the docks" (Doyle, *Sherlock* 2: 394). Yet Watson reserves his common pattern of yellow descriptors not for the English Holmes, but for the suspect, Culverton Smith, whom Watson describes as having "a great yellow face, coarse-grained and greasy" (2: 393). Smith brings the disease from his plantation in Sumatra and uses it to murder his nephew Victor Savage; he also sends an ivory box with a hidden infected spring in an attempt to communicate the disease to Holmes, who then uses the opportunity to set a trap for Smith by pretending to be on the brink of death. In "The Dying Detective," Smith's yellow face signals an intricate but indistinct combination of criminality, foreignness, and biological contagion. Like Brontë's "yellow taint of pestilence" (*Shirley* 399), the references to yellow here work to place the origins of disease (even one contracted in London) somewhere other than Britain, in a vague and othered tropical region.

It is for this reason that Doyle and his writings often offer a figurative representation of illness through color and metaphor, rather than a purely scientific depiction. At the turn of the twentieth century, the long dominant miasma theory, which had located the site of disease in the unhealthy atmosphere of a particular environment, was quickly being replaced by the new discipline of epidemiology, which posited germs as the infectious agents (S. Harris 456). Yet, as Harris argues, miasma theory "survived as rhetoric long after it was dead as science." She explains,

> The concept of miasmatic poison died as hard as it did because it facilitated the ideological and commercial work necessary for the British imperial presence in India. By encoding poison into the very soil and air of the 'tropical' region, it preserved not only the idea of radical difference between the 'exotic' English governors and the immune indigenous subjects but also an adversarial relationship between the colonist and his climate that could be used to justify environmental exploitation. (457)

This is especially true of the fiction of Doyle, who was cognizant of the advances made in germ research in the 1880s and '90s. As Harris points out, "Despite medical advances of which he is well aware, Doyle is unwilling to give up the miasmatic conception of disease for the microbial one" (457). Doyle's memoir, *Memories and Adventures*, illustrates this refusal: in telling of his brief stint as a ship's surgeon on a route along the Western coast of Africa, the author portrays the entire continent as an unhealthy environment full of contagion and capable of "kill[ing white men] as one crushes nits" (48). In writing his memoir in the 1920s, Doyle recounts his experiences as the surgeon of an African ship line just as he viewed them in 1881. As Harris illustrates, Doyle attributes his own illness to a "greasy swell off that huge lagoon" rather than the "germ or mosquito or whatever it was" (457). He makes use of the medical knowledge of 1881 rather than the 1920s, because doing so allows him to portray Africa itself as an unhealthy and therefore adversarial environment.

In reality, Doyle had closely followed the development of epidemiology within his lifetime; he even published an article in the *Review of Reviews* on his visit to Dr.

Robert Koch's laboratory in Berlin in 1890, three years before the publication of "The Yellow Face." Doyle heralded the Nobel laureate, who identified the bacteria of tuberculosis and cholera, as the "great master mind" who was "working . . . to bring[] under subjection those unruly tribes of deadly micro-organisms which are the last creatures in the organic world to submit to the sway of man" ("Dr. Koch" 552). Doyle did not meet "the illustrious discoverer" personally, but was able to tour his labs at the Hygiene Museum (552); he claims to have been "the first English physician to arrive in Berlin after the announcement of Koch's discovery [of a potential treatment that kills the tubercle bacillus], and I had opportunities of seeing all the cases which are under treatment" (555). Interestingly, Doyle's description of Koch sounds as if it could have been the description of one of his sickly fictional characters; he reports, "Associates say that . . . his lined face and dry yellow skin are the direct results of the germ-laded atmosphere [of the laboratory] in which he has so fearlessly lived" (556). Here, in his journalism, Doyle again makes the connection between disease and yellowness, as Koch's contagion can be diagnosed through its permanent effects on the surface of the body. Furthermore, although Koch is European, Doyle manages to associate his contagion with the East, as the article identifies a recent cholera epidemic as spreading from "the eastern portion of Europe" and "Egypt" (555). In this article, Koch is the valiant Teutonic soldier sacrificing his own health in the fight to defend Europe from a foreign contagion closely associated with foreign people (the "unruly tribes of deadly micro-organism"). Doyle's version of Koch fulfills a role similar to that Watson and

Holmes, who labor to defend England from the dangers, physical and moral, that originate abroad and constantly threaten to strike back against the ruling British Empire.

Doyle's recurring rhetorical patterns throughout the Holmes canon illustrate the detective genre's performance as a bulwark against fin de siècle decline and the fears of imperial blowback. Doyle's work blends the diagnosis of disease with the detection of crime into one medico-legal discourse. The power of medical diagnosis, however, pales in comparison to the ideological work of this discourse, which uses words to paint a picture of difference that is knowable. The medical-scientific team of Holmes and Watson not only reassures an anxious reading public that no crime can go undetected (after all, Holmes fails in Norbury only because a crime has not been committed), but also that ties to any racially or morally dubious foreign influences cannot be hidden. In "The Yellow Face," Lucy cannot successfully pass in England, and her true (foreign) origins are revealed through the combined power of rational detection and fictional rhetoric. The many meanings of yellow assigned to Lucy, as a mixed-race child of questionable health, undercut any outwardly positive presentation of racial acceptance. Although the plot necessitates the possibility of Lucy's welcome into Munro's family unit, Doyle's rhetoric all but ensures that the reading audience does not extend her the same courtesy. In presenting Lucy alternately as yellow mulatto and a Negro clown, Doyle indicates that she is a dangerous source of racial and physical contagion that should not be welcomed into the national community.

The Secret Garden

The Secret Garden continues Doyle's concern with reading the body by using health, climate, and complexion to set up a narrative triangle that measures (and dictates) whiteness and belonging. The novel begins with a description of the nine-year-old British colonial Mary Lennox, who is said to be "the most disagreeable-looking child ever seen" (3). She is depicted as having "a little thin face and a little thin body, thin light hair and a sour expression. Her hair was yellow, and her face was yellow because she had been born in India and had always been ill in one way or another" (3). In Burnett's opening lines, Mary's yellowness is emphasized as a vital detail necessary for understanding the narrative arc of the book, as yellow serves as a polysemic signifier representative of all the dangers of India that Mary must overcome during the course of the novel. As Elizabeth Buettner explains, at the turn of the century, colonial "children's mental, moral, and physical development were inseparable in the eyes of physicians and lay writers alike, and were seen to stem . . . from India's geography" (36). In a similar manner, Mary's ill health, spoiled behavior, Oriental corruption, questionable whiteness, and estrangement from her hereditary home and people are all encapsulated in this figurative use of yellow.

While visibly corrupted by her time abroad, Mary is a candidate for rehabilitation because underneath the yellow sign of her mental and physical degeneration, she is biologically white. Mary's poor health and behavior are treated as the negative consequences of being a European out of place in the tropical India. Once she is removed from this foreign environment, Mary's white heredity can reassert itself, an

option not available for the half-black Lucy. The central narrative is one of healing, as a young Mary is sent to live in her uncle's Yorkshire house, Misselthwaite Manor, following the death of her parents from cholera. Her move from India to England is portrayed as a journey home that cures her of the moral and physical deterioration of India through the temperate English climate and healthy English culture. Mary's consequent indoctrination into Englishness is signaled to the reader through her complexion, as her frequently mentioned yellow skin and slight stature are slowly altered into the sturdy frame and pink-and-white complexion of the ideal English child.

One of the most interesting similarities between the fictions of Doyle and Burnett is both authors' use of outdated scientific theories when depicting disease. Both cling to an outdated notion of miasmatic theory, one that places the blame for disease on the environment (the air itself is diseased), rather than make use of the well-established advances of bacterial epidemiology. Although Burnett has notably less knowledge of developing germ theory than the former medical doctor Doyle, she continues to portray miasmatic theory in her writing well after it became obsolete. For instance, in her portrayal of the cholera epidemic in the opening of *The Secret Garden*—a plot device necessary to render Mary an orphan and prompt her removal to England—cholera is presented as an unstoppable miasmatic killer, spreading diffusely as if carried in the wind. In reality, after Koch isolated the bacterial source for cholera in 1883 (nearly thirty years before the publication of Burnett's work), it was well known that improved personal hygiene in food preparation and ingestion, as well as the simple expedient of boiling one's water and milk, could arrest the spread of the disease (Buettner 38).

Burnett's dramatic portrayal of the cholera epidemic illustrates Harris's claim that miasmatic theory "survived as rhetoric long after it was dead as science" (456).

In the first chapter of *The Secret Garden*, "There Is No One Left," Mary is orphaned by an outbreak of cholera that kills everyone else in her father's compound. Burnett's depiction exaggerates the speed and danger of the disease, perhaps reflecting the common nineteenth-century understanding of Asiatic, or tropical, cholera as a particularly virulent strain, a perception that resulted from a series of deadly nineteenth-century epidemics; as Mark Harrison explains, during the mid-nineteenth century, "cholera in its new, epidemic form served as constant reminder of the [perceived] pathogenic environment that was India" (19). Burnett's portrayal emphasizes the epidemic aspects of the outbreak, as the narrator states, "The cholera had broken out in its most fatal form and people were dying like flies" (5). Furthermore, "There was panic on every side, and dying people in all the bungalows" (5). Burnett's cholera claims lives very quickly, as many pass away within hours of showing symptoms. Although it is medically possible for victims to die that quickly, it is extremely unlikely even in "severe" cases (approximately ten percent of all cases) because death is not caused by the disease itself, but by the diarrhea and vomiting that accompanies the infection (Ramamurthy and Bhattacharya 343). It is the "loss of fluid and electrolytes from the body [that] leads to dehydration which is the main cause of death due to cholera" (343). The dangers of dehydration can be countered by adequate fluid intake during treatment, which "reduces the death rate to less than 1%" (345). The fictional depiction of an unstoppable cholera invasion that causes people to "d[ie] like flies" illustrates not the

medical reality, but the legacy of the European fear of tropical diseases that killed and seemingly dehumanized colonizers abroad in the earlier stages of imperial expansion. Although Burnett grossly exaggerates the symptoms and speed of the spread of the cholera, she seems to feel no need to explain or justify the disease's presence in the text and instead appears to expect her readers to share her depiction of India as a site of white mortality, a likely enough expectation at the turn of the century.

One of the ways that Burnett avoids the medical realities of cholera in the early twentieth century is by presenting this particular section of the novel through Mary's eyes, despite the presence of an omniscient narrator in the text. The result is a fractured narrative that reads more like a battle scene of death and destruction than like a description of an outbreak of a preventable disease. Foster and Simon point out,

> the early scenes of the book project a powerful image of disorientation as filtered through Mary's consciousness. Her situation in the plague-ridden house appears as a fragmentary, almost dream-like sequence of isolated images and overheard scraps of conversation, only half-comprehensible to the child's imperfect grasp of events. (179-80)

Mary's imperfect understanding not only emphasizes the "confusion and bewilderment" of the epidemic, it also allows Burnett to skip over any details concerning the prevention and treatment of cholera (5). While other characters are presumably suffering, "Mary hid herself in the nursery and was forgotten by everyone . . . strange things happened of which she knew nothing" (5). Mary's limited viewpoint contracts further when, on the second day of the outbreak, she sneaks into the dining room and eats some of the meal

that had been left on the table in the panic. To quench her thirst, she drinks a full glass of wine that renders her so "intensely sleepy" that "She lay down on her bed and knew nothing more for a long time" (5). When Mary finally awakens, the epidemic has passed, and the servants have all either run away or, like her parents, succumbed to the disease. By using Mary's viewpoint, which is never clearly developed and disappears altogether while Mary sleeps, Burnett is largely able to ignore important features such as the transmission of the disease as well as the prevention and treatment options.

Burnett's presentation of the cholera's transmission relies on outdated version of environmental or miasmatic theory, but also incorporates a few elements of the new epidemiology to present the Indian people as the source of contagion. This overlap between the people and the environment as the cause of disease was not unusual in fin de siècle literature, where, as Harris argues, "cholera and other fevers are for a time both miasmatic and contagious" (458). Walter Besant's 1891 short story "Quarantine Island," for example, indicates that diseases were "still attributed to . . . unhealthy locations, but [were] now seen as transmitted primarily through human contact" (458). Twenty years after Besant's story, Burnett uses a similar technique to indicate the origins of the disease in the landscape, but passed through interracial interaction with the native population. To Mary, the disease seems to come from out of nowhere and for no reason, as she simply awakens on "one frightfully hot morning" to find her nanny missing and strange events taking place; unbeknownst to Mary, cholera has arrived without warning at the compound (3). Burnett's text ties the introduction to the disease with a description of the "frightfully hot" tropical climate as if it is the heat itself that causes the disease, as

was believed until the last quarter of the nineteenth century (Kennedy 19). Furthermore, the narrator states that Mary felt "There was something mysterious in the air that morning" (Burnett 4). The "something" to be found "in the air" seems to suggest the outdated miasmatic understanding of disease, in which it is the Indian atmosphere itself that is poisoned.

Yet Burnett locates the origins of the cholera epidemic not only in the India's environment, but also in its people who transmit the disease to the British colonials. Mary awakens on that fateful morning only to find that "the servant who stood by her bedside was not her Ayah" (3). Her Ayah, or native nanny, Saidie has "been taken ill in the night" (5). The detail of the missing servant suggests that the disease first manifests itself in the native population before spreading to the Anglo colonists; in fact, Mary's Ayah is the first person on the compound to expire. It is only after hearing the wailing of the other servants mourning Saidie's death that Mary's mother, the Mem Sahib, even realizes that the epidemic has reached her household (4). This portrait of the cholera as a contagion passed from person to person (rather than ingested through infected food or water) is further implied in the manner of Mary's survival. Mary is the sole survivor on the compound because she is forgotten in the confusion and left isolated in her room for several days. The novel implies that if she had been properly cared for by either the servants or her parents, she would have also contracted the disease through contact with others. Burnett's presentation of the disease as both miasmatic and contagious works to place the responsibility for the disease on India and its people rather than with the British colonial servants who fail to take proper precautions.

While Burnett portrays India as a site of inevitable white mortality in order to make Mary's removal to England seem the only viable option for her survival, her novel does fault Mary's mother, the Mem Sahib, for her failure to take proper precautions to protect her family from the Indian environment. However, the precautions suggested by the novel still follow an outdated medical system. Rather than the basic hygiene and food preparation techniques promoted by "medical discourse and prescriptive literature" for colonial households (Buettner 28), the precaution that Burnett suggests is fleeing the low-country environment and people. On the morning of the outbreak, Mary overhears a young soldier reprimanding the Mem Sahib for remaining at the compound when presumably the cholera outbreak has been moving steadily closer. He states, "You ought to have gone to the hills two weeks ago" (4). The frightened Mem Sahib answers, "Oh, I know I ought! . . . I only stayed to go to that silly dinner party. What a fool I was!" (4).[95] Europeans viewed the "hills" of India, particularly the Himalayas, as an ideal refuge from both the heat of the country and the diseases of the native population. In the nineteenth century, the British Raj built its forts and sanitariums in this hilly country because the higher altitude offered a temperate and therefore more European climate. As Burnett's text implies, a retreat to the hill stations at the first sign of danger would have been seen as a retreat from India itself.

Historian David Arnold explains that the establishment of the hill stations promoted "a growing distinction between the tropical diseases of the [Indian] plains and the quasi-European environment of the hills" (9). Their perceived necessity derived from a larger imperial discourse that reconceived the traditional division between

Occident and Orient in environmental terms, in which "tropical" environments were set up in opposition to the "temperate" region of Europe (2). Arnold explains, "Calling a part of the globe 'the tropics' became a Western way of defining something environmentally and culturally distinct from Europe. . . . The tropics existed in a mental and spatial juxtaposition to the perceived normality of the northern temperate zone" (2). He draws on the work of Edward Said to point out that "the tropics as a social construction . . . [were] an especially potent and prevalent form of othering" that worked to reinforce imperial racial distinctions (2). The division of tropical and temperate also strengthened a belief in what Harrison calls "climatic determinism," which combined the racialized understanding of an "inherent physical quality that was unalterable and definitive of certain peoples" with their connection to their native environment. It resulted in the assumption that tropical climates were always "incompatible with European bodies" (Harrison 15, 9). In the late 1850s, in the wake of the Indian Mutiny and the continual loss of European settlers to tropical diseases, the English Parliament launched an investigation into the longevity of Europeans living in India, asking "whether the climate of the Indian plains posed an insuperable barrier to permanent colonization" (Kennedy 33). The committee determined that "the physical frame of the European could not withstand the effects of high temperatures and tropical diseases." Instead, European settlers would continue to degenerate until they "die[d] out in the third generation" (33). Because of the premium placed on the temperate environment, time spent in the hill stations was believed to offer a temporary but vital respite in which Europeans might recuperate from the year spent immersed in the Indian climate and

culture. This was particularly true for women and children, who were presumed to be more vulnerable, both physically and morally, than the men (35).

Joseph Dalton Hooker, director of England's famous Kew Gardens and a close friend of Charles Darwin, documented the result of the Indian environment on the ill health of Anglo children during a botanical specimen gathering tour in 1854. While visiting Darjeeling, Hooker noted that the Anglo children seemed to recover their health when removed to the temperate environment of the hill station. He writes,

> I believe that children's faces afford as good an index as any to the healthfulness of a climate, and in no part of the world is there a more active, rosy, and bright young community, than at Dorjiling. It is incredible what a few weeks of that mountain air does for the India-born children of European parents: they are taken there sickly, pallid or yellow, soft and flabby, to become transformed into models of rude health and activity. (119-20)

Hooker's narrative reads children's complexions and ties "pallid or yellow" skin specifically to the Anglo-Indian children born in a foreign tropical climate. Hooker also intimates that the children's sickly complexions can be transformed into the "rosy" skin of native-born English stock through their removal from the heat of India to the neo-European environment of the Himalayas. His intermingling of climate, skin color, and bodily health reflects a common rhetorical pattern that Burnett incorporates in her own narrative of a little girl who "seems to be sick with the contagion 'India'" (Cadden 62). Mary's opening description as a "sickly" girl with "a little thin body" and a "yellow"

face nearly exactly matches Hooker's depiction of "yellow," "soft," and "sickly" Anglo-Indian children (Burnett 3). The close resemblance of the novel's description to Hooker's nonfiction work of nearly sixty years previous suggests the lasting power of the rhetorical combination of climate, health, and complexion.

Although Hooker's narrative portrays the positive effects of the mountain environment on young Anglo-Indians, it was commonly believed that the hill stations could only help the very young. Staying too long in India increased the risk that physical deterioration could progress into full-scale degeneration. Harrison explains that the concern over "prolonged exposure to the Indian climate" in children was so widespread that it was believed that "Not even the salubrious climate of the hills seemed able to revive the 'country born'" after seven or eight years of age (219). For colonial parents, the solution was to send their children back to England in order to save them from the Indian climate and culture; Indira Ghose writes that many parents felt "it was imperative for them [imperiled English children] to leave the shores of the country as soon as possible and attend boarding school in England" (220). In *The Secret Garden*, other Anglo-Indian parents make this difficult decision, and they contrast significantly to Mary's mother, who seems to have made no plans for Mary's health or future education. The officer's wife entrusted to escort the orphaned Mary on the journey from India to England is herself "taking her children to leave them in a boarding school" (8). She is not an indifferent mother; rather, the impression is that she is making a sacrifice to save her children from the dangers of degeneration. Similarly, the English clergyman Mr. Crawford, who watches over Mary before she leaves India, has also sent his eldest

daughter to live with her grandmother in England (8). Mary's removal to England, it is implied, should have happened much sooner, and her Uncle Craven should have been her guardian well before the cholera outbreak. The novel kills off Mary's parents in order to return Mary to England, her biological home.

Burnett paints Mary's journey to England—Phillips calls it a "pilgrimage" (170)—as a homecoming necessary for Mary's continued development. Because "The physical influence of India itself is blamed for many of Mary's physical and emotional woes" (56), as critic Mike Cadden states, it is necessary for her health that she return to her native environment, here presented as the land of her heredity rather than the land of her birth. The novel depicts Mary's illness as a symptom of a colonial system that unnaturally separates the Anglo colonists from their natural environment, which was believed to be superior to that of the rest of the world. In *Climates and Constitutions*, Harrison explains that "the bracing climates of the north were thought to act as incentives to physical and mental effort, whereas the enervating climate of the tropics predisposed to stagnation" (16-7). Therefore, it was the harsh Northern environment that had made the British physically stronger and "inherently superior to their Indian subjects," who were understood to have degenerated to the point of weakness over centuries of life in a hot and fertile climate (16-7). The languor of the Indian people has spread to Mary through her time in the tropical heat, as the text states, "In India, she had always been too hot and languid and weak to care much about anything" (Burnett 41). As soon as Mary is removed from the detrimental "other" environment of India, she begins to feel better; her transfer to the right climate and the right culture for her Anglo-

Saxon body saves her from the dangers of degeneration. As Mary acclimates to Englishness, her transformation is expressed rhetorically through the triangle of climate, health, and complexion.

Mary's conversion into a reclaimed English citizen begins immediately upon her arrival at her uncle's estate, Misselthwaite Manor, located on an isolated Yorkshire moor. As Mary tells her Uncle Craven, "I never liked it in India . . . I was always ill and tired and it was too hot . . . But here it is different" (70). The difference Mary feels, and the return to health she experiences, is shown to be directly caused by the climate of the North, whose strong wind can literally blow health back into the Anglo colonist. When Mary first goes outside to play, the wind is depicted as directly responsible for her improvement in health because of its stimulating and energizing qualities: "She was stirring her slow blood and making herself stronger by fighting with the wind which swept down the moor . . . the big breaths of rough fresh air blown over the heather filled her lungs with something which was good for her whole thin body and whipped some red color into her cheeks and brightened her dull eyes" (27). Burnett's description of the chilly Yorkshire wind, which "roars" and "wuthers" (30), closely recalls Harrison's account of "bracing climates of the north" (16-17). The novel intimates that the climate and wind are "waking" Mary up from her heat-induced torpor. The reader is informed that Mary "was becoming wider awake every day which passed at Misselthwaite. She was beginning to like to be out of doors; she no longer hated the wind, but enjoyed it. She could run faster, and longer, and she could skip up to one hundred" (53). Mary's mind is also becoming healthier; the narrator tells us that "The fact was that the fresh

wind from the moor had begun to blow the cobwebs out of her young brain and to waken her up a little" (29). Burnett's phrasing of this transformation places determined and repetitive emphasis on the role of climate in Mary's return to health. The text announces, "There is no doubt that the fresh, strong, pure air from the moor had a great deal to do with it. Just as it had given her an appetite, and fighting with the wind had stirred her blood, so the same things had stirred her mind" (41). The phrases "the fact was" and "there is no doubt" force the reader to make a direct connection between the Yorkshire climate and Mary's return to physical and mental health. As Cadden explains, these "value-laden" descriptions of "England as 'fresh' and India as 'languid' . . . go far toward persuading the reader to feel relief that Mary has 'escaped' the land in which she was born and raised but which is clearly not home" (56).

The textual signs for Mary's health are expressed through the yellowness of her complexion, which serves as a measure of her overall well being. Although there are many tropical diseases endemic to Asia,[96] yellow fever is not one of them. Therefore Mary's yellowness cannot be taken as literally as little Lucy Hebron's medical history. Instead of being an actual symptom of infection, Mary's yellowness seems to suggest the lingering discourse of the bodily humors. As the yellowing symptoms of jaundice are caused by excess bile, and bile is one of the four traditional humors, Mary's yellow skin is used to signal a physical imbalance. The early system of the physiological humors often tied the health of the body to that of the mind, and the connection was furthered strengthened in the late nineteenth century through the founding of the church of Christian Science, which believed in the mind's and spirit's healing powers over the

material body. Burnett's interest in Christian Science and its connection between mind and body can be seen in *The Secret Garden* when the narrator explains that Mary's "disagreeable thoughts . . . affected her liver and her digestion and made her yellow and tired" (163).[97] This comment suggests that her anger at her neglect in India, combined with the effects of the tropical heat, has led her an excess of bile, which in turn, has resulted in a yellow complexion. Yellow skin, then, can be read as a direct expression of Mary's poor mental and physical health. This abstract medical discussion is depicted in a similar manner to the murky cholera epidemic at the beginning of the novel, as both rely on antiquated medical knowledge that is more figurative than scientifically accurate.

Because Mary's yellowness is figurative, it can also serve as racial commentary. Using yellow skin to represent racial contagion was a common trope in nineteenth-century literature, as exemplified in Doyle's mysteries, Kipling's Indian fiction, and the works of many others. In the case of Burnett's novel, Mary's yellowness is linked to her racialized and poor behavior that stems from her early interaction with the "obsequious and servile" natives (16), as well as her parental neglect. Because Mary's native servants "always obeyed her" as the racial superior, she never learned to be considerate of others. In fact, the novel describes her as "nasty tempered" (26), "imperious" (26), and even as "tyrannical and selfish a little pig as ever lived" (3). Phillips refers to Mary's behavior as a form of "Oriental despotism" because it is a "power without limits" (173). Yet this racialized behavior from the colonies is clearly out of place in England and must be remedied.

When Mary arrives in Yorkshire, she first attempts to treat Martha, a Yorkshire native, in the same way as she would her native servants in India. When Martha reveals that she had thought that Mary might be an Indian native, rather than of English parentage, an affronted Mary quickly has a temper tantrum. Martha tells Mary:

> "I've never seen a black an' I was fair pleased to think I was goin' to see one close. When I come in to light your fire this mornin' I crep' up to your bed an' pulled th' cover back careful to look at you. And there you was," disappointedly, "no more black than me—for all you're so yeller." (17-18)

Mary's response to this illustrates her spoiled nature. The narrator states, "Mary did not even try to control her rage and humiliation" (18). Instead, she screams at Martha as she would a servant in India (her favorite insult there was "Daughter of Pigs," presumably for Hindu and Muslim alike) (4). But the real reason for Mary's rage is not Martha's presumption, as Mary claims, but that fact that Martha confuses Mary with a black native. This misconception hits too close to home for Mary, whose racial identity, like that of many real colonists, is made vulnerable through her interaction with other lands and peoples. Historically, Harrison explains, it was "feared that long residence in India would lead to the loss of attributes which had distinguished the imperial race" (19). The belief was that "They [colonists] would become neither European nor Indian, but a kind of hybrid, inferior to both" (19). The repeated references to Mary's yellowness, therefore, symbolize her hybridity. She is not Indian, and is therefore not black, as Martha expects. But due to her physical and moral degeneration during her time in

India, she cannot yet be aligned with whiteness. Here, as it had in nineteenth-century prose, "yellow" becomes the perfect adjective for Burnett to signal Mary's not quite white nature and behavior.

The textual references to Mary's yellowness become less frequent as the child gains in health and begins to absorb English values. The next time that Martha mentions Mary's connection to the "blacks" of India, Mary, who has spent some more time in England, responds with new moderation and consideration. Martha tells her siblings at home all "about the little girl who had come from India and who had been waited on all her life by what Martha called 'blacks' until she didn't know how to put on her own stockings" (42). Yet Mary's time spent out of doors, her newfound ability to dress herself, and her interaction with the healthy Yorkshire natives all work together to signal a change in Mary's behavior. This change is directly linked to her restraint when Mary hears that the Sowerby children "did like to hear about you. . . . They wanted to know all about th' blacks an' about th' ship you came in. I couldn't tell 'em enough." Rather than getting upset, as she would have done previously, Mary "reflected a little." At last, she tells Martha, "I'll tell you a great deal more before your next day out . . . so that you will have more to talk about. I dare say they would like to hear about riding on elephants and camels, and about the officers going to hunt tigers" (42). This new willingness to educate the Sowerbys about her past, rather than throw a tantrum at their ignorance, is one of Mary's first unselfish acts and illustrates that she has begun to overcome her "imperial" attitude. In the novel's logic, Mary's calm and rational consideration in the second comparison of her to the Indian 'blacks" illustrates the

acquisition of one of the English characteristics that begins to move her away from blackness and closer along the continuum to whiteness. As she gives up her "imperious Indian" ways, Mary solidifies her white identity.

The dual influence of the healthy English climate and values on Mary is expressed to the reader through the medium of her complexion. The Yorkshire natives view her skin color upon her arrival from India as shockingly yellow and unnatural. The gardener, Ben Weatherstaff, with his particular brand of Yorkshire "plain speaking" (25), accuses Mary of being "yeller" (54). He declares, "when tha' first came into this garden . . . Thinks I to myself I never set eyes on an uglier, sourer faced young 'un" (54). He also refers to her as a "scrawny butter-milk-faced young besom [broom]" (128), an insult that combines the sour taste of buttermilk with its pale yellow coloring.[98] The repeated references to sourness and yellowness from the estate's gardener liken Mary to a lemon, a tropical citrus fruit that is particularly unsuited to a Yorkshire garden. Like Weatherstaff, the housekeeper Mrs. Medlock is also surprised at Mary's ill health and plain looks when she greets the child off the boat in London and thinks to herself, "A more marred-looking young one I never saw in my life" (10). She exclaims to Mary's escort, "My word! she's a plain little piece of goods!" (9). The officer's wife replies, "Perhaps she will improve as she grows older . . . If she were not so sallow . . ." (9). Even the friendly maid Martha sometimes describes Mary as a "plain sallow child" (160), but more often as "yeller" (18, 89). The surprise and continual disbelief of the Yorkshire people at Mary's unnatural and un-English complexion reinforces for the reader that her skin color is a problem that must be remedied.

The purpose of this characterization is to make Mary's otherness visible. In Burnett's writing, skin functions as a reflector of the character's hidden interior; it is a way for the author to make abstract constructions of physical and moral health more concrete for the reader. A transformation of skin and complexion, from yellow colonial otherness to pink-and-white Englishness, makes legible the development of the body and self. As Mary Ann O'Farrell writes in her study of complexion in the English novel, the blush is a "readable sign system" which "promise[s] to render body and character legible" for reader and writer "by revealing the body's truth" (4, 6). Burnett adapts the trope of the blush, inherited from the nineteenth-century novel of manners, to the pre-World War I preoccupation with health and muscular Christianity; instead of the blush, Burnett uses the flush, the involuntary appearance of blood in the skin of the face during physical exertion, to signal healthy circulation and the vitality of the body under the surface of skin. However, like the blush that evidences social acculturation, the flush used so repetitively by Burnett can also signal moral and cultural well being, which to Burnett is synonymous with the achievement of Englishness. Simply put, the flush writes Englishness on the face.

In their red-cheeked, healthy glows, the Yorkshire characters' complexions contrast with Mary's and serve as aspirations for her to achieve in her physical and moral transformation. Many of these characters belong to the lower classes, being either the servants of Misselthwaite or cottagers from the moors. Though poor, these hardworking characters serve as models of healthy Englishness for the spoiled and unhealthy members of the Craven household.[99] For example, Mrs. Medlock, the first

English character Mary encounters, is introduced as a "stout woman, with very red cheeks and sharp black eyes" (9). Mary's servant Martha is a "round, rosy, good-natured looking creature" who has "a sturdy way" about her (16). Martha's mother, Mrs. Sowerby, has a "comfortable rosy face," and her many children are described as a "collection of sturdy little bodies and round red-cheeked faces . . . a healthy likeable lot" (168). The culmination of all this Yorkshire pink-cheeked sturdiness is found in her son Dickon, who is also Mary's first friend. Critic György Tóth describes Dickon as "a Pan-like figure, a free spirit of the Yorkshire Moors" due to his happy disposition and intimate relation with nature (144). The peasant boy Dickon possesses the archetypal British complexion, with rusty red hair, bright blue eyes and red cheeks. Mary declares the blue of Dickon's eyes to be "exactly the color of the sky over the moor," illustrating that Dickon's eyes are both the color of England's nature and of English nature (Burnett 66). Dickon's Englishness consists of more than just his eyes, however, as the narrative places much emphasis on his red cheeks. Often commented on, his cheeks are compared to the English plant life that he tends in the manor's garden. They are variously "poppy-colored" (66), "poppy-cheeked" (58), "red as poppies" (57), and "red as cherries" (86). Not only are Dickon's red cheeks the ideal English complexion, they also represent the ideal English constitution. Their sturdy redness is tied to the flush of health as Dickon avers, "I never ketched cold since I was born . . . Mother says I've sniffed up too much fresh air for twelve year' to ever get to sniffin' with cold" (63). As opposed to sickly, Indian-born Mary, the native Dickon's constitution has been strong and hardy since birth, a feat accomplished through hard work in a healthy outdoor environment.

Mary's achievement of health on the inside is expressed on the outside of her body as her complexion slowly loses her India-induced yellow pallor and acquires a healthy pink tint to match that of Dickon and the other Yorkshire natives. Through the exercise of gardening and frequent doses of the fresh moor air, Mary becomes like Dickon, and the narrator proudly declares that one spring morning, "Mistress Mary's hair was as tumbled as Dickon's and her cheeks were almost as poppy red as his" (93). Each successive session playing out of doors results in the reward of a healthy flush: after a long day outside, Mary is described as "glowing with exercise and good spirits" (97). Another day, the narrator reports, "She had been running and . . . she was bright with the air and pink-cheeked" (114). The other Yorkshire characters look on admiringly at the changes in Mary, which signals their acceptance of her into the community. Martha tells Mary, "Th' air from th' moor has done thee good already . . . Tha'rt not nigh so yeller and tha'rt not nigh so scrawny . . . Tha'rt not half so ugly when . . . there's a bit of red in tha' cheeks" (89-90). Later, Mrs. Medlock comments, "She's begun to be downright pretty since she's filled out and lost her ugly little sour look. Her hair's grown thick and healthy looking and she's got a bright color. The glummest, ill-natured little thing she used to be" (151). By achieving a higher level of health, Mary is rewarded with the attribute of beauty and the promise of blooming into a true English rose.

The novel ends with Mary's achievement of the English conception of beauty, a pink and white complexion, which also signals her achievement of her prescribed gender and class roles. Melanie Prosser declares that Mary "is aligned into Englishness via her

ever-pinkening complexion" (244); this alteration implies that Mary will grow into a marriageable English woman worthy of a wealthy English gentleman. Her lately accomplished flush of health will have one last transformation into the blush of the English beauty "in bloom," a botanical term that expressed a girl's "social and sexual maturation" in a proper, "rhetorically managed" manner (King 4). Mrs. Sowerby's compliments on Mary's newly achieved health allude to this future metamorphosis; she says, "Tha'rt grown near as hearty as our 'Lisabeth Ellen . . . Tha'lt be like a blush rose when tha' grows up, my little lass, bless thee" (253). When she is compared to a blush rose, Mary's miraculous transformation from a degenerating, sickly, yellow Anglo-Indian child to a beautiful and blooming English girl is marked as complete. Indian deterioration has been safely curbed, and Mary has successfully assimilated into her natural homeland of England. In the purging of yellow, Burnett assures the reader that Mary will live to reproduce her healthy white Englishness.

To conclude, Burnett's novel furthers Doyle's identification of the dangers of colonial contact in "The Yellow Face" by offering a blueprint for excising the influence of the foreign and reclaiming the colonial body for England. Her narrative shares the same assumptions as Doyle's by intimating that the dangers to the English way of life come from without and by marking this danger in yellow, the color of warning. In doing so, both authors participate in a longstanding literary tradition, in which the cultural meanings of yellow have been racialized to suggest the presence of difference in the religious, cultural, or colonial other. This tradition is not only more widespread than the figurative use of other colors in British fiction, it is also remains more constant over the

century: yellow is employed by Burnett and Doyle at the turn of the twentieth century in much the same way as Thackeray and Brontë had done almost fifty years before at the beginning of the Victorian era. The difference, of course, is that Burnett and Doyle must work much harder to dismiss half a century of scientific and medical knowledge in their portrayals of illness and racial contagion. Neither author exhibits a willingness to use the possibilities of color to consider the position and experience of the colonized in the manner of Collins's and Hardy's blue and red experiments of the 1860s and 1870s, which moved away from the realities of biology to a more figurative exploration of difference. In contrast, Doyle and Burnett use color to cement difference, and both seem unwilling to give up the conveniences of color-coded racial shorthand, despite the fact that these discourses were largely invalidated by the immense scientific and cultural changes that occurred over the course their lifetimes. Or perhaps it is the other way around: maybe it is because of these changes that these fin de siècle authors cling tightly to comforting Victorian racial conventions in the face of impending world war. Unfortunately, the conventions established in Victorian culture and science would not be seriously questioned again until after the hard lessons of World War II, which revealed the role that scientifically sanctioned eugenics played in the horrors of Nazi genocide.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

As is suggested by the previous chapter's discussion of *The Yellow Book*, and yellow as a shade representative of the "outrageously modern" (Holbrook 54), color enjoyed a revitalization by the fin de siècle, embraced as it was by the aesthetes and the avant-garde. After Sir William Perkin's invention of synthetic dyes and paints, color was suddenly everywhere in the late nineteenth century, a phenomenon that is illustrated by the competing categorizations of the 1890s as the "yellow decade" and the "mauve decade." In 1926, for instance, Thomas Beer published a study of late nineteenth-century American authors entitled *The Mauve Decade: American Life at the End of the Nineteenth-Century*. His book began with an epigraph from artist James McNeil Whistler: "Mr. Whistler said: 'Mauve? Mauve is just pink trying to be purple'" (3). Beer's book and choice of epigraph demonstrate the extent to which color and conceptions of modernity became intertwined by the turn of the twentieth century.

As the above Whistler quotation indicates, much of this change in the cultural views of color over the second half of the nineteenth century was led by member of artistic and literary circles. While color's impact spread to fashion, décor, and print media, it is in the visual arts that the rise in color's fortune is most clearly illuminated. What began with the Romantics embracing a "general lightening" of the artist's palette in the earliest part of the century was further expanded by the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist engagement with the "luminous colors" of synthetic paint and *plein airisme* at the end of the century (Pastoureau, *Black* 176). As John Gage explains, "By

the late nineteenth century colour had become a central, and in some places *the* central preoccupation of European painters and their public" (*Culture* 247). This work with color in art was continued in the early twentieth century by some of the most prominent of the modernist painters such as Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gaugin, and Georges Seurat, all of "whose innovations were . . . heavily dependent on color for their formal daring and expressive power" (Nochlin, "Picasso's Color" 106). Many other modernist artists, including the Symbolists, the Fauves, and the Expressionists, also made use of color to achieve new meanings and forms of expression a period marked by the cultural upheavals of war. Linda Nochlin declares the coloring of Henri Matisse and his fellow Fauves (French for "wild beasts") to be "the ultimate fruition of these late 19th-century [Impressionist and Post-Impressionist] liberations of color from the strictures of traditional form. It was a movement in which pure, brilliant, untrammeled color functioned as the very touchstone of advanced art" (106). A direct outcome of the color revolutions of the nineteenth century, the celebration of color and coloring is one of the most prominent achievements of modernist art.

David Batchelor would be quick to point out, however, that the modernist promotion of color does not mean that the prejudice against color dissolved from Western culture; rather, it suggests that that the modernists recognized and embraced the cultural otherness of color. As Holbrook Jackson states in his study of the 1890s, bright egg-yolk yellow was thought to be "outrageously modern" because it symbolized "all that was *bizarre* and queer in art and life" (54). Holbrook's observation, and its reference to the "bizarre" and the "queer," recalls Batchelor's contemporary discussion

of "chromophilia," which he views as the flip side of "chromophobia." Batchelor explains:

> On those occasions when colour is given a positive value, what is most striking is how its chromophobic image—as feminine, oriental, cosmetic, infantile, vulgar, narcotic and so on—is for the most part, not blocked, stopped, and turned around. Rather the opposite: in chromophilic accounts, this process is usually both continued and accelerated. Colour remains other; in fact, it often becomes more other than before. (71)

Batchelor's statement illustrates that the color changes of the late Victorian era and modernism remain on the same continuum as the previous negative views of color in Western culture: whereas previous painters had rejected the otherness of color, these turn of the century painters accepted the otherness of color, then deployed it to make their own statements concerning the events and meanings of modernity.

As a result, color continued to be associated with the Other in both the visual arts and literature throughout the twentieth century. The desire to experience the life of the Other that is seen in eighteenth-century voyage literature, in which characters such as Robinson Crusoe and Lemuel Gulliver experience alterity during their voyages abroad (Crusoe as a slave and Gulliver as a miniature person displayed as a curiosity), manifest themselves slightly differently in the nineteenth century. The whimsy of Swift's giants and talking horses and the wonder of an unmapped world needed an update for the scientifically and industrially-minded Victorian era. The literary experiments with fantastic color change in the nineteenth century, suggested by the many technological,

artist, and scientific developments in color's meaning during the period, fulfilled the spirit of these eighteenth-century explorations of alterity, without the requisite foreign setting of the traveler's tale genre. Color become the perfect cultural nexus through which to grapple with the problems of imperial identity and impended modernity. In the twentieth century, color can still be seen as an important element in the literary desire to (usually temporarily) inhabit the body of the Other, though its use often shifts along with the century's cultural and historical developments.

Although the motif of color change in the nineteenth century functioned to allow authors, characters, and readers a means to explore the experiences of the cultural and racial Other, the majority of the texts discussed in this work, with the exception of *Jane Eyre* and "The Yellow Face," feature experiments with colorful otherness that are predicated on the characters' original whiteness. Diggory Venn and Mary Lennox return to whiteness by the end of their respective texts, and while Oscar Dubourg is permanently discolored from his use of silver nitrate, his blueness is countered by his conventional marriage and the maintenance of his high social position. In fact, all three of these redeemed colorful characters originate from a position of social respectability, while Mary and Oscar could be classified as members of the upper classes. In these three fictional works, marriage and financial success are left open to these white-characters-turned-colored, provided that they continue to adhere to social and national norms in other arenas. In contradistinction, Brontë's and Doyle's texts illustrate that these options are not available to those characters whose coloring is representative of their hereditary difference. This type of genetic coloring can never be erased: Bertha

Mason is purple to the day of her violent death, while little Lucy Hebron is permanently marked in a manner that will likely deny her social and financial advancement in her adulthood. Combined, the five fictional works illustrate Lillian Nayder's observation that "the ability to cross racial boundaries seems to be an English prerogative" in texts of the period ("Collins" 268). The treatment of crossing racial boundaries remains relatively one-sided throughout the first half of the twentieth century. While new genres such as invasion fiction, the spy novel, science fiction, and children's literature further investigate the nature of otherness, it is not until the second half of the century that the practice of crossing racial boundaries is investigated in anything like a dual-sided manner.

Although the details of this pattern of experiencing alterity fragments and shifts after the Victorian era, it continues to emphasize a physical difference that is external and therefore visible. At the turn of the twentieth century—perhaps because color has become somewhat naturalized in cultural discourse and is therefore perceived as less shocking or daring—literary authors often combine color with other, exaggerated markers of difference such as alien or animal bodies. For example, Franz Kafka's 1915 novella *The Metamorphosis* takes up this theme of bodily transformation by depicting a protagonist, Gregor Samsa, who unaccountably wakes up one morning in the body of a giant insect. This narrative of transformation and its engagement with otherness expresses the alienation that is seen as inherent to the modern condition. Other literary works feature scenarios of what Stephen D. Arata calls "reverse colonization" to enable the experience of alterity (621). Like the voyage literature of Swift and Defoe, and the

color change of the nineteenth century novels discussed, these popular narratives created elaborate plots in which "the [English] colonizer finds himself in the position of the colonized, the exploiter becomes exploited, and the victim victimized" (Arata 623). This reversal can occur through an invasion of England, either by foreign powers (usually European, Chinese, or Japanese), or by an extraterrestrial entity, as in H. G. Wells's *The War of the Worlds* (1898). With the development of science fiction, the concepts of difference embodied by color change in the nineteenth century can be figured through other types of bodily change, particularly the trope of alien bodies.

An early prototype of science fiction, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), presented a bodily change similar to that of the earlier *Poor Miss Finch*. In Stevenson's novella, the title character Jekyll drinks a potion, but rather than turning a strange color like Oscar Dubourg, Jekyll transforms from a civilized English professional into a bestial and primitive Other referred to as Hyde. The racial aspects of Hyde's difference are emphasized by skin tone descriptors such as "dusky" and "black" throughout the work (79, 68). Wells's *The War of the Worlds* further exaggerates the otherness represented by the degenerate Hyde by envisioning a Martian as the invading Other. This extreme form of otherness—which was not only inhuman, but also inorganic—dramatized alterity in a different manner than the color change trope, but still relied on color markers and binary distinctions. Most clearly, *The War of the Worlds* juxtaposed the green ecological environment of the (temperate regions of) Earth with the invasive and alien Red Weed, with Wells making clear use of color symbolism and pictorial effect. Although Wells's novel did not feature a

transformation in which a human became an Other, as in the color changing texts, it did present a scenario in which the British reader was explicitly placed in the same position of "the Tasmanians, [who] in spite of their human likeness, were entirely swept out of existence in a war of extermination by European immigrants" (7). Experiencing the helpless fear of the novel's characters during the invasion was meant to help English readers contemplate the world from the perspective of the Other, as well as their own engagement with the oppressive nature of British imperial practices.

Recently, several contemporary films have used new technological advancements to experiment with transforming humans into colorful animals or aliens to represent the experience of otherness. The Disney animated film *The Princess and the Frog*, released in 2009, tackled the problematic issue of race with a two-pronged approach: the movie, set in New Orleans, featured Disney's first black cartoon protagonist, Tiana (voiced by African-American actress Anika Noni Rose), as well as a plotline in which both hero and heroine are magically turned into frogs. Through this transformation, the characters have the opportunity to experience life in the shoes of the Other and learn to appreciate what they already have. Disney plays on the cultural ubiquity of Kermit the Frog's "It's not easy being green" to underline the racial nature of this transformation to greenness. The inclusion of dialogue such as "the only thing important is what's under the skin" and "it don't matter what you look like" further emphasizes this racialization. While the message is admirable, the simplified dialect in which these lines are spoken (by Mama Odie, an elderly voodoo priestess, and Ray, a Cajun lightning bug, respectively) suggests that some work remains in sensitively presenting racial identities through color and

animation techniques. Also released in 2009, James Cameron's live-action film *Avatar* created a blue Other in a scenario that is explicitly colonial: the human characters have invaded the planet Pandora in order to mine it for the rare mineral unobtainium. The film juxtaposes the corrupt military-industrial civilization of the humans against that of the nature-worshipping native Na'vi, a humanoid species with vibrant blue skin and feline facial characteristics. In the plot, human Jake Sully uses a computer-generated avatar to experience life in a Na'vi body; the ensuing events follow the typical "going-native" plot of previous films such as *Dances with Wolves* when Jake falls in love with a Na'vi woman and joins them in their uprising against the corporate exploitation of the planet.[100] The film's portrayal of the Na'vi, who have been frequently compared to the noble savage found in Western literature and film, was implicitly racialized by the fact that the Na'vi characters were voiced by black actors and dressed in African jewelry and hair styles, elements that stood out dramatically in comparison to the mostly white live action cast. *Avatar* has been criticized for creating "a fantasy of race told from the perspective of White people" ("Does Sci-Fi Blockbuster 'Avatar' Have a Racist Subtext?"). Other reviewers asked, "Is blue the new black?" (Mardell), illustrating that the non-human aspects of the Na'vi's blue coloring did not stop viewers from recognizing the film's underlying racial politics. As this discussion of greenness and blueness in film suggests, color continues to be an attractive metaphor for re-envisioning racial divides in the twenty-first century.

As a predominantly visual medium, film is also well positioned to explore this theme of color change's specific relationship to racial passing. In the second half of the

nineteenth century, in the wake of the Civil Rights movement, film directors and actors began experimented with using makeup and special effect techniques to present the black man's take on the nature of whiteness. One of the first examples of this role reversal was Melvin Van Peebles's 1970 film *Watermelon Man*. The film re-envisioned the concept of John Howard Griffin's exposé of racial prejudice *Black Like Me*, published nine years earlier. Van Peebles's film makes use of fictional elements not possible in the documentary style of *Black Like Me* and its 1964 film dramatization of the same name, as *Watermelon Man* imagines a bigoted white man who suddenly wakes up one morning as a black man, to the surprise and horror of his still-white family. The revolutionary nature of the film comes not just in its subject matter, and somewhat comedic take on what was then a fraught political issue, but also in the choice of a black director and leading man (for comparison, the film version of *Black Like Me* featured the white actor James Whitmore in black face). Van Peebles, best known for the blaxploitation film *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song* (1971), explains that Columbia Pictures had originally been in talks with Alan Arkin and Jack Lemmon, two popular white actors, to star in the film. Van Peebles had another idea and pointed out that the main character, Jeff Gerber, is only white for the first ten minutes of the movie. He asked the studio, "Why don't you get a black guy to play in white face? Is that possible? And then stay black for the rest of the movie?" (Van Peebles). The choice was made to cast Godfrey Cambridge, an African-American actor, who would perform in white face makeup in the first section of the movie, than appear in his natural skin tone after Gerber, through the magic of film, turns black overnight. The movie's "racechanging

script" was meant "to raise white consciousness about American racism" by portraying the white man's experience of racial prejudice (Gubar 27), but the film itself depicted a black man in white face makeup who gleefully parodied the experience and concerns of whiteness. One of the most enjoyable parts of the film is the opening credit sequence in which Cambridge, in white face, lampoons Gerber's self-obsessed participation in the tanning and exercise crazes of the early 1970s, illustrating them to be the superficial concerns of an overly privileged group. The makeup for this sequence was skillfully done (helped along by the character's predilection for tanning beds and his resulting bronze, rather than pale, complexion), and Cambridge became the first actor to play in whiteface opposite a white cast in such a mainstream venue.

Since then, several prominent black actors and comedians have put their own spin on this theme. In *Down to Earth* (2001), standup comedian Lance Barton (played by standup comedian Chris Rock) is accidently taken to heaven before his time and is sent back down to earth in the only body available, that of the recently deceased white business patriarch Charles Wellington, III. The role of Charles Wellington is played alternately by the black Chris Rock and white Brian Rhodes. The use of both actors allows the film to address questions of racial identity and interracial relationships through Barton's interest in the black activist Sontee Jenkins (Regina King) and the fact that he must court her in his elderly white body. It also introduces questions of class and the access to wealth as Barton suddenly finds himself in charge of a largely ill-gotten capitalist fortune. The Wayans Brothers film *White Chicks* (2004) ups the ante of *Down to Earth* by not only doubling the number of black characters performing in white face,

but by also having men masquerade as women. In the film, two black FBI agents and partners, Kevin and Marcus Copeland (played by Shawn and Marlon Wayons, respectively), find themselves going undercover, through the use of makeup and plastic prosthetics, as two spoiled rich white girls who are in danger of being kidnapped during their weekend retreat in the Hamptons. Though *White Chicks* presents its leads in white face for most of the movie, and *Down to Earth* alternates shots of Chris Rock in his natural appearance with those of white Brian Rhodes, both films exploit their main characters' new access to the elite social sphere, which is presented as predominantly white. Like *Down to Earth*, *White Chicks* also pushes the boundaries of interracial relationships; while the film assigns black romantic interests to both main characters, there is an interesting comedic subplot in which black athlete Latrell Spencer actively pursues Shawn Wayon's white alter-ego Brittany. These two films exist in a larger genre of black cross-dressing and gender-bending roles in which comedic actors Eddie Murphy, Tyler Perry, and Martin Lawrence have frequently appeared in films as elderly, and often obese, black women. Interestingly, it seems that the white prerogative of racial crossing in this genre of film has been replaced by the male prerogative, as there is little to suggest that black actresses can appear in white face in the same manner.

One last clear genre in which the spirit of nineteenth-century color transformations endures is in children's literature. Perhaps because of the cultural connections made between children and their joyful appreciation of color, the color-change motif seen in the nineteenth-century can be seen throughout the twentieth century. The most famous example is that of little Violet Beauregarde in Roald Dahl's

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (1964). During the tour of the Willy Wonka factory, the greedy Violet snatches, against all recommendations, a piece of Wonka's incomplete magic chewing gum. The gum contains all the flavors of a three-course dinner, and when Violet reaches the third course, there is a terrible reaction. The blueberry pie and cream flavor she is chewing causes her to first turn a "brilliant, purplish blue" and then swell into a giant blueberry (97). Although the fruit juice is later removed from Violet, returning her to her normal size, her face remains tinged "purple" upon the conclusion of the book, a permanent marking in punishment for her vice (149). Author Charles de Lint plays on this antecedent in his young adult novel *The Blue Girl* (2004), where the main character Imogene is accidently and temporarily turned blue by a fairy, who uses too much of a magical herb meant to protect her from evil spirits. This blue coloring is also representative of Imogene's previous unruly behavior, dyed blue hair, and tattooed body, details that place her character not only squarely in the tradition of Dahl's blueberry girl, but also in that of Hardy's rebellious and colorful reddleman.

English author Neil Gaiman's 2009 story "Orange" also follows in this tradition and features the fantastic color change of children's literature combined with the science fiction element of alien abduction; it was originally published in *The Starry Rift*, a science fiction collection aimed at teen audiences. In the story, the teenaged protagonist, Jemima Glorfindel Petula Ramsey, has a bratty little sister named Nerys who is transformed into a radiant orange light when she greedily uses a mysterious dye in place of her self-tanning lotion. The resulting orange entity asks to be addressed as "My Immanence" or the "Vehicle" and becomes set on "complete world domination" (67,

69). She uses mind control to hold Jemima, her twelve-year-old brother Pryderi, and their inventor mother hostage until the family is suddenly released by an alien spaceship that takes what is left of Nerys away with it. The aliens promise to not to hurt Nerys, and to bring her back if they ever find a way to reverse her transformation, before disappearing with the girl into the night sky. Gaiman's "Orange" combines two of the themes discussed throughout this dissertation: the pleasure of bright color and an interrogation of the meanings of whiteness.

The entire story is told in the format of a 70-question questionnaire that Jemima is answering (she presumes for the government). The original questions to which Jemima is responding are omitted, and the reader is left to piece together the events from the fragments of information contained in Jemima's answers. Like Collins and Hardy, Gaiman identifies the means by which the character experiences the fantastic color transformation, though certain details remain shrouded in mystery. What is known by the reader is that Jemima's mother is a successful inventor whose most recent project is an attempt to create a children's toy called "My Mum's Colored Bubbles" (64). For conducting her experiments, Mrs. Ramsey had been "buying colors and dyes from all over the world" (66). Jemima testifies that she found an empty jar, with "foreign lettering" (66), outside Nerys's window the morning after her mother forgot to purchase the younger girl's tanning cream. As Jemima tartly explains, "It didn't take Sherlock Holmes to figure it out" (67). Though one can guess at the sequence of events, the origins of the foreign jar remain unknown, as does Nerys's fate once she is transformed and abducted. Unlike Dahl's Violet Beauregarde, whom Nerys resembles in her spoiled

greed, the orange girl cannot be sent to the juicing room and simply returned to her regular form—Nerys's bodily concerns have caused her to forfeit her body and transform into a shapeless entity of pulsating light.

The incident occurs, however, not only because of Nerys's pursuit of color, but also because of her mother's. Mrs. Ramsey has been working without success for five years to invent a mixture that children can use to blow "brightly colored Day-Glo bubbles" (65). Jemima explains that the problem her mother has encountered is not in creating the colorful concoction, but in controlling it: "The thing with the Day-Glo bubbles is not that someone can blow glowing colored bubbles, it's that they don't pop and leave splashes of dye all over everything. Mum says that would be a lawsuit waiting to happen" (66). In other words, Mrs. Ramsey is pursuing a joyful encounter with color that is transient; she is searching for a color that does not mark. The experience of her daughter Nerys, however, illustrates the difficulty of this quest: any engagement with color is not without its repercussions as color's negative qualities often taint or rub off on its users. This is certainly the case for Nerys, whose tanning habit has resulted in her older sister inventing a plethora of rude nicknames for her: "Tangerine Girl. The Oompa-Loompa. Carrot-top. Go-Mango. Orangina" (65). These jokes, though made at one character's expense, nonetheless bring the joys of color to author and reader, providing both a source of sharp humor and pictorial interest for the story.

As Nerys's nicknames demonstrate, much of the story focuses on the tanning aspect of her transformation. Tanning is primarily a social practice that engages with complex class and racial politics. As Michel Pastoureau explains, in the West, it has

been traditional for the upper classes to cultivate the "the palest, smoothest skin possible in order not to be confused with the peasants," who spent the majority of their time outdoors and exposed to the elements (*Black* 172). Tanning as social practice, according to Pastoureau, derives from the period of the Industrial Revolution, in which urban laborers began working in factories, traveling underground, and living in artificial light provided by gas or electricity. By the second half of the nineteenth century, he argues,

> the important thing was no longer to distinguish oneself from the peasant, but from the worker who worked within or under the earth and whose skin never saw the rays of the sun . . . 'good society' thus sought the open air, began to frequent the seashore (and later the mountains); it became fashionable to display a suntan, and smooth, bronzed skin. (172)

Pastoureau describes a second shift, this time away from tanning, in the 1960s and 70s, when access to sea and winter vacations became "democratized," after which "'good society' increasingly turned its back on tanning" as a practice (172-3). While the extent to which tanning has decreased in popularity since the 1970s may be debatable, Pastoureau's discussion does isolate the many ways in which tanning is a social performance closely related to ideas of class and race.

Gaiman's "Orange" illustrates the social politics inherent in a literary discussion of tanning. As Pastoureau states, in the late twentieth century, tanning (and especially over-tanning) became the province of those groups who try too hard to appear to belong, such as the "nouveaux riches and starlets—two ridiculous social categories" (173). Gaiman exploits these "ridiculous" qualities of tanning, aligning Nerys with the tacky

nature of the young Hollywood starlet. Jemima explains that when Nerys entered her teens, she "starting reading these magazines and putting pictures of these strange bimbo women up on her wall" (65). Furthermore, Nerys has since decided that she wants "to be a pole dancer" when she grows up and practices by filming herself "dancing nuddy" (66). To Jemima, Nerys's over-use of tanning cream is a manifestation of this tasteless and somewhat desperate side of her sister. Jemima states, "Her [Nerys's] friends would wear it too, but they never put on it like she did. I mean, she'd slather on the cream, with no attempt to look even human colored" (65). Like the Victorian characters discussed previously, Nerys is seen to give up her humanity through her association with artificial color. And since there is no apparent way to make Nerys human again, there is little fuss from the protagonist and her family when the aliens take Nerys away.

One of the primary reasons that tanning is not well regarded in Western society is its association with cosmetic color and therefore the superficial. Richard Dyer categorizes tanning as a "cosmetic" practice, because the action of light on the skin is often accelerated by "any amount of ointments," or even caused by artificial rays (49). The cosmetic nature of Nerys's tanning cream is emphasized by Jemima's statement that "You couldn't go near her for hours after she put it on. And she'd never give it time to dry after she smeared it on her skin, so it would come off on her sheets and on the fridge door and in the shower, leaving smears of orange everywhere" (65). This description features an "artificial" orange cream that is tactile like paint or makeup (65). Jemima demonstrates this same desire to condemn the cosmetic when she expresses her contempt for the "former friend" who stole her last boyfriend, whom she refers to as an

"evil bottle-blond" (68). Jemima's comments recreate the "association of colour, cosmetics, and femininity" common since Antiquity (Batchelor 53), illustrating that Nerys has fallen prey to the false seductions of color. In fact, Nerys and her coloring are associated with nearly all of the negative cultural meanings of color as identified by Batchelor. Nerys's color is feminine and cosmetic and therefore superficial in nature, it is associated with the foreign through the dye pot with mysterious lettering and origins, her desire for color is viewed as both infantile and vulgar by her elder sister Jemima, and her color is even drug-like in its ability to transform her from an human to another entity. The complete otherness of Nerys's engagement with color is finally demonstrated in her abduction by aliens, who, as extra-terrestrials, function as the ultimate Other.

"Orange" also illustrates the second reason that tanning is not well respected in Western culture: its association with racial color. Tanning on the part of the white person has been read as representative of "The desire 'to be black'" in order to have access to the "sensuality and fun" perceived to be more available to non-white peoples (Dyer 49). Dyer argues that in this way, the practice of tanning functions similar to that of "white people's relationship to black music and dance," in that it "displays white people's right to be various, literally to incorporate into themselves features of other peoples" (49). In this case, tanning can be seen as a borrowing from blackness, a borrowing of the best parts of otherness, in the same way that Diggory Venn's color allowed him access to the freedom of the cultural Other. This borrowing, however, is predicated on never really losing one's whiteness—tanning allows one to temporarily imbibe the qualities of color, without erasing one's other signs of whiteness. That is, of

course, unless one goes too far with the practice, skipping past tan on the way to orange as in Gaiman's story, or even moving all the way to black, as is the case in *Watermelon Man*. These films and stories use the imaginary possibilities of storytelling to exaggerate the consequences of taking a practice too far. They suggest that borrowing the various qualities of the Other, or even temporarily passing as the Other, is one thing, but crossing over permanently and relinquishing one's whiteness, and the privileges it affords, is another altogether. It is something that must be guarded against in Western culture.

If we presume Nerys to be white, and all signs seem to point to her whiteness,[101] then her over-tanning can be read as a form of racial betrayal, somewhat akin to "going native" or miscegenation. When Nerys begins to emit a "pulsating orange" light, there is a sense that she has gotten exactly the orange glow she had been so desperately pursuing. In fact, the whole story reads like a gleeful comeuppance that one might flippantly imagine while gazing at a snapshot of an impossibly tan and blonde young actress on a Hollywood red carpet. In this fantasy, Nerys receives her comeuppance for her superficial and spoiled qualities. However, because the practice of tanning cannot be divorced from racial politics, she is also punished for giving up her privileged status as white by artificially coloring her skin. In a way, this modern day color change tale functions very similarly to those of the nineteenth century discussed earlier: what begins as a celebration of the possibilities of color (with those fun, child-friendly Day-Glo bubbles of Mrs. Ramsey's) ends up as an indictment of the pursuit of color and the forfeiture of whiteness. Nerys has gone too far in her attempts to self-color and, like

Bertha Mason, Oscar Dubourg, and Lucy Hebron, will not be returning to whiteness. Her punishment for her actions is that of exile: she is sent away into the vast realms of space with the alien Other.

As this reading of "Orange" demonstrates, much work still needs to be done to disentangle the discourses of race and color, as well as the relationship between color and culture, in Western society. If Dyer promotes the need for twenty-first-century society to "mak[e] whiteness strange," that is to mark whiteness and study the cultural constructions that buttress white dominance, then we must also pay greater attention to the meanings of color in the twenty-first century. As is demonstrated by the fantastic skin transformations in the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century fictional texts—from *Jane Eyre* to *The Secret Garden*—that form the subject of this work, color change is also in part about making whiteness strange. The study of color and the study of whiteness are simply different sides of the same coin, as author E. M. Forster indicates in *A Passage to India* (1924) when his character Mr. Fielding "scandalize[s]" the English members of his club in India by commenting that "the so-called white races are really pinko-grey" (65). In marking whiteness, as the earlier authors used color to mark otherness, Forster's novel prompts the reader to "consider what it [white] does connote" and points to the exploitation of the colonial Other as the result of leaving racial constructions unexamined (65). Yet, color's cultural meanings and their relationship to power disparities continue to be insufficiently acknowledged in the twenty-first century. This dissertation has attempted to remedy this omission and formalize an understanding of color as primarily a cultural creation. Humanist scholars must recognize that color is

a concept deeply intertwined with Western constructions of gender, class, and race (along with many others) if we wish to continue the political work of deconstructing these hierarchical structures in the future.

NOTES

[1] John Gage's subjective/objective distinction has been framed in various other manners in other fields; for instance, "Johannes Itten, in his *Kunst der Farbe*, distinguishes between pigments as chromatic reality and our perceptual response as chromatic effect" (qtd. in Eco 157).

[2] In "How Color Conditions the Colours We See," Eco makes the claim that "our chromatic perception is determined by language" (175). However, as he discusses, the linking of language to individual colors is often very loosely constructed. Brent Berlin and Paul Kay's influential study of color linguistics identified up to eleven basic color terms common to most languages (1-14); in contrast, the Optical Society of America "classifies a range of between 7.5 and 10 million colours which can theoretically be discriminated" by eye if not named (qtd. in Eco 167).

[3] The reaction of the viewers to the brightness of Titian's coloring illustrates one of the essential difficulties in discussing the historical use of color, which is that "We see the colors transmitted to us by the past as time has altered them and not as they originally were" (Pastoureau, *Blue* 8). This is particularly true of painting because pigments are vulnerable to chemical interaction with light and air.

[4] Of course, this division oversimplifies a very complex issue. The same restoration techniques that exposed the "shocking" colors of Titian to London audiences have also illustrated Michelangelo's skilled coloring techniques. Gage reports, "The cleaning of the frescoes of the Sistine Ceiling and . . . the *Doni Tondo* in Florence have revealed Michelangelo to be a colourist of unsuspected originality and power, fully in command of a highly saturated palette" (*Culture* 137).

[5] Lyons explains that the "main thrust of Gladstone's paper is to demonstrate that the Homeric concept of colour was less mature and more 'indefinite' than ours" because he felt there was a "paucity of colour terms" used for "poetic effect" in Homer's works (215). Others scholars have accounted for this as a stylistic difference between the literatures of ancient Greece and nineteenth-century England, but there is also a linguistic difficulty in translating between two language's color terms. In ancient Greek, for instance, "luminosity is more important than hue in the colour vocabulary" and there is, therefore, less of a need to differentiate between shades of blue and green, which can use the same color term (217). It seems that ancient Greeks could see blue, they just didn't call it blue.

[6] Here, Eastlake seems to be referencing the nineteenth-century fascination with the blush, which was thought to be both an external indicator of health (the appearance of blood in the face) and of emotions (such as embarrassment or sexual attraction).

[7] Sue Thomas finds that "Before 1850 four meanings of Creole were in circulation in Britain: white people of Spanish descent naturalized by birth in Spanish America; people of non-aboriginal descent naturalized by birth in the West Indies; non-aboriginal people 'of different colors' (white or 'negro') born in Spanish America . . . and white people of European descent naturalized by birth in the West Indies" (2).

[8] For instance, Patricia McKee argues that she is "metaphorically" dark rather than "assign[ed]…a biological blackness" (70), while Deirdre David argues that "the novel never specifies whether she is black or whether she is not" (108). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak describes her as a "white Jamaican Creole" who is treated as a "native 'subject'" by the English ("Three" 247).[8] Susan Meyer argues that while "she is clearly imagined as white—or passing as white—in the novel's retrospective narrative [as told by Rochester]," in the course of the narrative action, she "has become black" ("Colonialism" 252).

[9] Lawrence Starzyk demonstrates "the centrality of the pictorial in the development of [Jane's] world view" in "'The Gallery of Memory': The Pictorial in *Jane Eyre*" (289).
[10] Even Branwell, who as a male was allowed to study oil painting and was provided with instructors, was said to have "never been instructed either in the right mode of mixing his pigments, or how to use them when properly prepared" (qtd. in Alexander and Sellars 84).

[11] Some of these engravings were decorated with color, which was added by hand to important elements in the composition after the printing process, but this color did not represent the original's color scheme or its use of shading. The Brontës did own a hand-colored edition of Robert Montgomery's *The Sacred Annual*, now housed at the Brontë Parsonage Museum. Charlotte Brontë produced a watercolor copy from the annual's lithograph "The Atheist Viewing the Dead Body of his Wife" by A. B. Clayton, but her coloring closely emulates that found in the annual, indicating that she either did not feel able or did not desire to color freely according to her own inclination.

[12] Christine Alexander argues in *The Art of the Brontës* that "there are no boldly imaginative drawings by Charlotte, despite [her] fertile imagination . . . all are a far cry from Jane Eyre's portfolio of surreal images that arouse the interest of Mr. Rochester" (38).

[13] Kromm reads the Evening Star as "a Bertha-like figure reified at the juncture of love, ecstasy, and madness" (381).

[14] For more information on the feminist agenda of *Jane Eyre*, see Spivak's argument concerning female "soulmaking" in "Three Women's Texts" or Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's discussion of Jane's desire for economic and romantic freedom and her female rage in *The Madwoman in the Attic*.

[15] In fact, using these two colors of paint would have in itself been a luxury due to their high cost. Azure refers to azurite, an expensive mineral that was imported from the Middle East since antiquity (Pastoureau 22). Carmine came from ground cochineal, an insect found in Latin America, and was imported by the Spanish (Finlay 145). Records from an 1849 paint catalogue from Winsor & Newton illustrate that a cake of Carmine cost five shillings, while Indian Red, Light Red, Venetian Red, and Vermilion cost only one shilling a cake ("Historical Catalogue"). Brontë's own modest paintbox did not contain Jane's expensive paints, as it contained a labeled space for Vermilion and her blue is identified as "Prussian Blue," an artificial coloring of inferior quality (Alexander and Sellars 48).

[16] Plato called cosmetics "A fraudulent, baseborn, slavish knave; it tricks us with padding and makeup and polish and clothes, so that people carry around beauty not their own to the neglect of the beauty properly theirs" through the discipline of the mind and body (qtd. in Lichtenstein 38).

[17] Antonia Losano, among others, discusses the depiction of the Orientalism painting of Cleopatra as odalisque in Brontë's *Villette* (1853). The narrator, Lucy, she states, "has no praise for the image, considering the . . . reclining figure morally repugnant . . . Lucy is offended by the languorousness" of the queen and the sumptuous, but "inefficien[t]" nature of her costume, which wastes costly materials (44).

[18] Later in the scene, Jane claims to have "sketch[ed] my own portrait in crayons" (137). Although most crayons are currently made of wax, historically many were made of chalk or charcoal and so would fit nicely under Jane's use of the term "chalk" (137).

[19] Similarly, Brontë was herself a better sketcher than painter. The only two works she ever exhibited, *Bolton Abbey* and *Kirkstall Abbey*, shown at the Leeds Exhibition of 1834, were pencil drawings (Alexander and Sellars 52).

[20] Historically, established painters would have delegated the mixing of their paints to their assistants (Finlay 18).

[21] Here I draw on Marjorie Garson's discussion of taste (in art, clothing, food, and design) in Brontë's novels in *Moral Taste: Aesthetics, Subjectivity, and Social Power in the Nineteenth-Century Novel*. Garson notes Brontë's "reli[ance] on polarity to organize her fictions," and her use of color and clothing to "underscore the binaries of the novel as a whole" (239).

[22] Leggatt and Parkes point out the historical Victorian understanding of hair as "an emblem of female sexuality" (173). Their Foucauldian reading of the scene focuses on Brocklehurst's taming of her hair as an act of control that moves to "make the human body into a machine" through the school's power structures (173-4). See also Joanne E. Rea's "Hair Imagery in *Jane Eyre*" for a Freudian reading of hair and sexuality in the novel.

[23] Brontë presents black trim or accessories as a tasteful way to tone down flashy color in her other works as well. In *Villette*, shy protagonist Lucy is horrified when her godmother gives her a pink dress to wear to a formal concert. Lucy attempts to "soften" the "bright tint" of the dress by adding "some drapery of black lace," which makes her feel more comfortable (491).

[24] Pink is also the color of the hated dress given to Lucy Snowe by her godmother in *Villette*. On seeing the color, Lucy exclaims "I thought no human force should avail to put me into it. A pink dress!" (490). The dress is made plainly to suit Lucy's style, but she cannot reconcile herself to the color pink; she explains, "the dress was made with extreme simplicity, guiltless of flounce or furbelow; it was but the light fabric and bright tint which scared me" (491).

[25] David explains that riding habits, which were closer in cut and manufacture to men's suits, were made by male tailors rather than dressmakers and therefore had "fully adopt[ed] the palette of men's dress" in the Victorian age (182).

[26] In the medieval era dying industry, there was a "taboo against mixing colors" which derived from dying restrictions that separated the dyers of madder (red dye) from the premises of the dyers of woad (blue). Because red and blue dyes could not be combined to make purple cloth, the ways to create purple remained rare (Pastoureau 69-73). Even purple paint was difficult to come by, as "a mixture of vermillion and lapis lazuli . . . [was] chemically very risky" and would likely degrade (Gage, *Meaning* 94). The scarcity of the natural materials for painting or dyeing purple tones assured that purple remained a color associated with luxury and wealth until the invention of aniline dyes.

[27] The shellfish are now known to be the *Murex brandaris* and *Murex trunculus* (Finlay 366). In 1998, the secret to the "most elusive natural dye method of all was rediscovered" by John Edmonds, an English dyer who was able to recreate the historic process using the Roman historian Pliny the Elder's incomplete account and substituting modern ingredients (Chenciner 293-95).

[28] Her palace walls were "lined with purple porphyry stone," a detail that gave rise to the phrase "born in [or to] the purple" to reference royal or wealthy parentage (Finlay 363).

[29] In Brontë's *The Professor* (published posthumously in 1857), the beautiful and sexually dangerous Mlle. Reuter also wears a "purple merino gown" during her attempts to seduce Crimsworth (144). At the point in which the dress appears, Crimsworth has just discovered her relationship with M. Pelet and has turned against her, now repelled by her "crafty" advances and games (144).

[30] In general, the purple worn by the Misses Brocklehursts and Miss Temple not only points to their higher class positions over Jane, but also seems to suggest their sexual maturity and marriageable status. For instance, after wearing her purple, Miss Temple is married off to the Rev. Mr. Naysmith and does not reappear in the novel (71). Since these ladies are not Jane's romantic rivals, however, they are not portrayed as sexual threats like Blanche, Rosamond, and Bertha.

[31] This relationship changes from a scientific perspective, as red and violet are complete opposites in the light spectrum, illustrating the variable and indefinite nature of any discussion or social understanding of color.

[32] Recreation work at the National Museum in Lebanon (the historical production center of the famous Phoenician purple dye) has produced color samples that suggest that the original Tyrian purple may have been closer to fuschia than the deep violet blue we imagine as purple today (Finlay 372). This further illustrates the very imprecise nature of the linguistic linking of color hue to color name.

[33] For more discussion of *Jane Eyre* and the science of phrenology, see Mary A. Armstrong's "Reading a Head: *Jane Eyre*, Phrenology, and the Homoerotics of Legibility" or the chapter on *Jane Eyre* in Nicholas Dames' *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1819-1870*.

[34] Susan Meyer notes this irony: "Blanche's white dresses, her mother's pet name for her ("my lily-flower"), and the meaning of her name all emphasize the ironic incongruity between what she tries to be and what she is: rather than embodying ideal white European femininity, this aristocratic Englishwoman is besmirched by the contagious darkness and oppressiveness of British colonialism" (260).

[35] Both Michie's "From Simianized Irish to Oriental Despots: Heathcliff, Rochester, and Racial Difference" and Joyce Zonana's "The Sultan and the Slave: Feminist Orientalism and the Structure of *Jane Eyre*" establish the Orientalized depiction of Rochester.
[36] Spivak discusses how this scene's description "renders the human/animal frontier as acceptably indeterminate" in order to "weaken her [Bertha's] entitlement under the spirit if not the letter of the law" ("Three" 247-9).

[37] Meyer explains in "Colonialism and the Figurative Strategy of *Jane Eyre*" that by associating dark skin with both the oppressed and the oppressor, "Brontë dramatically

empties the signifier of dark skin in her novel of any of its meaning in historical reality and makes it merely expressive of 'otherness'" (261).

[38] As critic Richard Collins explains, "Laura's extreme femininity or asexuality, [is] signified by [the] unmodulated lightness, fairness, and transparency veiled in the ultra-symbolic white fabrics" of her dress (155).

[39] In this capacity, Marian is similar to the novel's villain, Count Fosco. Fosco is closely associated with luxury and color throughout the novel, especially in his penchant for expensive and "magnificent waistcoats . . . of light garish colors" (224). The Count is also fond of physical indulgence (especially in pastry form), which has resulted not only in his being "immensely fat," but also in his development of a "sallow" or "yellow-white" skin color (220-23).

[40] John Sutherland writes in his introduction to the Oxford World's Classics edition of *The Woman in White* that upon the novel's publication, "Middle-aged men by the score fell in love with Marian Halcombe. One took the liberty of writing to Wilkie Collins for the name of the original, so he could present his proposals" (vii). Edward FitzGerald, writer and translator of *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám,* even "named a herring-lugger he owned Marian Halcombe, 'after the brave girl in the story'" (vii).

[41] In the Christian Middle Ages, green was often added to the color system to enable the representation of the four elements: "fire is red, water is green, air is white, and earth is black" (Pastoureau, *Black* 22).

[42] David Wilkie is best known for his revitalization of British genre painting, which consisted of the depictions of everyday life, in the first half of the nineteenth century. Collins was less accomplished in the genre than his friend Wilkie, with his paintings often presenting idealized depictions of the rural poor designed to appeal to rich patrons (see *Rustic Civility*, fig. 3.1). Tim Dolin has suggested that Collins's "success . . . was secured at the price of originality and, in the end, an enduring reputation" (13).

[43] The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood consisted of only seven members, though they had many associates like Charles Collins who contributed to their exhibits. Millais nominated Collins for membership in the Brotherhood, but although the three founders, Millais, Hunt, and Dante Gabriel Rossetti voted to include Collins, Thomas Woolner and William Michael Rossetti voted against him. Hunt wrote that Collins's rejection stemmed from the fact that "none of the sleeping members knew him, and they suspected he was very much of a conventional man who would be out of his element" (190). Millais stated sympathetically that the rejection "cut Collins to the quick" (Holman-Hunt 189).

[44] "The Clique," led by William Powell Frith and Augustus Egg, was "emphatically populist and democratic" (Dolin 9). They opposed the principles of the academy and "were committed to elevating the status of genre painting over history painting" (9).

[45] As Jacqueline Lichtenstein illustrates, the Academies of Europe have always traded on art's "relation to language" (142). In order to gain prestige for the fine arts, the early Academicians attempted to "prove its [painting's] relation to discourse" by emphasizing both the genre of historical narrative and the skill of drawing, because "Whether in Aristotelian or in Platonic categories . . . drawing is always defined as an abstract representation, a form of a spiritual nature, whose origin resides solely in thought, the mark of an intellectual activity that proves, to those who condemn painting, that the latter always follows a 'design' or project" (149). For this reason, any "attack" on the "privileged position of drawing" by colorists was viewed as an attack on "the institutional base of painting's general dignity" (148). Whistler, well aware of this, deliberately uses color to challenge the position of the British Royal Academy of Arts, whose members had so frequently rejected his works from their exhibitions. His most famous battle with academic art came when Whistler sued critic John Ruskin for libel in 1877 over Ruskin's condemnation of his painting *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket*.

[46] Whistler painted *The White Girl* in France and submitted it to the Royal Society in London, which rejected the work. It was then exhibited in a private gallery in London.

[47] The whole limerick reads:

> There's a combative artist named Whistler
> Who is, like his own hog-hairs, a bristler;
> A tube of white lead
> And a punch in the head
> Offer varied attractions of Whistler. (Daly 11)

[48] Interestingly, the lead paint Whistler used—the same that the eighteenth-century sitters of Reynolds and Gainsborough used to lighten their complexions—was notoriously poisonous, and he suffered from "painter's colic" during the winter that he completed the painting (Daly 5). White lead was also still being used as a cosmetic skin lightener in the 1860s and '70s (Finlay 112).

[49] The Indian Mutiny (also referred to as the Sepoy Rebellion) began with the imprisonment in irons of 85 sepoys (Indian soldiers in the British military ranks) because they refused to "bite open [rifle] cartridges" that were rumored to be "greased with pig and cow fat," the ingestion of which would have been considered a violation of the sepoys' religious and caste doctrines (109). When the sepoys were "given 10-year sentences for insubordination," their fellow soldiers revolted, killing several British officers (Tuson 292). Many historians emphasize that the "greased cartridges incident . .

. was only the catalyst for a more widespread explosion of unrest both in the army and among the Indian civilian population that was brought about by several decades of enforced and ill-considered westernization . . . [and] the imposition of Christian evangelism on Hindu and Muslim society" (292). As a result, the rebellion quickly spread throughout the Mughal region of the Northern Indian plains and resulted in the sieges of many European cantonments and settlements (Walsh 109). Because of the high mortality rates of British civilians—400 men, women, and children were infamously killed at Cawnpore (109) —the British reaction was swift and brutal, motivated by a "grossly exaggerated picture . . . of wide-spread physical attacks on European women . . . in the public mythology" (Tuson 291). Due to superior organization, 40,000 British troops quelled the activities of over 230,000 sepoys in Northern India over the course of the year, and their "reprisals [against the Indians] were particularly vicious and frequently indiscriminate" (291).

[50] Lillian Nayder argues of *Black and White* that by "creating a hero whose racial identity is repeatedly redefined over the course of three acts, and whose status as a slave or an aristocrat depends on his geographical location rather than his character or 'nature,' Collins uses Count de Layrac [the protagonist] to suggest the arbitrary and shifting grounds of 'whiteness' and 'blackness,' and to collapse the distance between them" (268-69).

[51] Gladden also argues that this deviance leads to "a series of narratives of otherness" that play upon Oscar's "illness, foreignness, [and] criminality" (483).

[52] Evidence suggests that this medieval practice may have been economically motivated, as well, since "wealthy red dyers asked stained-glass artists to represent the devil as blue" to "discredit" the color and limit the profits of the rival blue dyers (Pastoureau, *Blue* 39).

[53] For further literary examples, see Chapter 5, "The Bluish Tinge in the Halfmoon; or, Fingernails as a Racial Sign," in Werner Sollors's *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature*.

[54] Madame Pratolungo's suggestion that Nugent's complexion is "just a shade darker" than Oscar's original coloring is perplexing. Although it may be a result of Nugent's exposure to sun during his sojourn in America (from which he has just returned), it could also be a moral sign that foreshadows Nugent's selfish nature and future villainy, though this would be somewhat counterproductive to the aims of the novel.

[55] The incident at the Cawnpore (Kanpur) settlement, in which approximately one hundred British women and children were imprisoned and later killed by rebel forces as British liberation troops approached, resulted in exaggerated tales of the Indians' depravity and sexual violation of the women prisoners which, as Priti Joshi explains,

were used to "legitimize revenge" on the part of the British (61). She continues, "Although British investigators as early as 1858 concluded that the allegations of rape, cannibalism, and mutilation were fabrications, that did not halt the circulation of such tales or the status of rape as the central trope of the mutiny" (61).

[56] Lucilla has some sense of the deceit practiced upon her, as she feels none of the "delicious *tingle*" of sexual attraction that she had experienced with Oscar while in Nugent's presence (329). Without all the facts, however, she has no option but to determine that "The restoration of my sight has made a new creature of me" (329).

[57] Interestingly, though Collins does so much to promote Ruskinian aesthetics in his work, it is this minute detail that raises Ruskin's ire against the novel. The image of Nugent's frozen corpse, as described in the report of the rescue mission's captain, strikes Ruskin as sensational and vulgar. In his *Fiction—Fair and Foul*, he condemns "novels like *Poor Miss Finch*, in which the heroine is blind, the hero epileptic, and the obnoxious brother is found dead with his hands dropped off, in the Arctic regions" (164).

[58] Although Collins erases the specter of miscegenation through the emphasis on the "bright blue eyes" and "rosy face" of Lucilla and Oscar's son, he concomitantly suggests that another Finch may form an interracial marriage. In the same paragraph, Madame Pratolungo reports that the Rev. Finch's second family, who have settled in "one of our distant colonies," is worried their little daughter Jicks, "the wandering Arab" of the family, "will end in marrying 'a chief'" (426).

[59] As John Jewell points out, "For shepherds, . . . reddle functions as a kind of scarlet letter" (160).

[60] Claude Monet later changed his mind about Turner and his coloring in the twentieth century, stating "Over the years I have liked Turner a great deal, but now I like him far less. He has given too little attention to the arrangement of color, and he has used to much of it" (qtd. in Gage, *Meaning* 162).

[61] Kate Flint outlines several reasons other reasons for the poor reception of early Impressionism in England in *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception*, including the questionable moral nature of some subject matter, as well as patriotism and national rivalries. The Impressionists met with more criticism than other avant-garde groups like the Pre-Raphaelites because of the perceived unfinished aspect of their works, which differed significantly from the minute brushstrokes and polish of Pre-Raphaelite painting.

[62] Although Impressionism was hardly popular or well-known in England in the 1870s, it is likely that Hardy would have been familiar with the growing movement, as he had taken trips to see art on the Continent in 1874 and 76 (Bullen 23-4).

[63] Turner's heavily annotated copy of Goethe's *Color Theory* is currently in the collection of the Tate Britain in London.

[64] In 2007, Anders Steinvall published a study of the collocations of emotions and colors in English by analyzing the corpus of the Bank of English at the University of Birmingham. His work shows that orange is most commonly collocated with joy (350), while red (including the terms scarlet and crimson) is a much more commonly associated with anger or love (358).

[65] Hardy's journals and literary notebooks demonstrate that he read Goethe's poetry and philosophy extensively, but do not specifically reference *Theory of Colors*. It is clear that the shared Romantic roots of both Turner and Goethe's positions on art, literature, and realism appealed to Hardy in a similar manner. In his *Literary Notebooks*, where he wrote down his thoughts and pertinent quotations from his expansive reading, he writes, "Several critics have caviled at Shakespeare's art for not being true to nature in the sense of so-called 'Realism'; but, as Goethe says, 'Art is called art because it is not nature.' Art is creative shaping; that is the business of the artist & of the special branch of art; to demand absolute truth to nature from a work is . . . superfluous, as nature herself gives us that" (Björk II: 204). The *Notebooks*' frequent references to Goethe, and common comparison of the greatness of Goethe to that of Shakespeare, illustrate that Hardy thought of the poet as a Romantic genius in the same manner as he thought of Turner.

[66] According to Berlin and Kay, there are eleven basic color terms in English: *white, black, red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange*, and *grey* (2).

[67] As Yeazell points out in "The Lighting Design of Hardy's Novels," "No novelist is more attentive to light than Thomas Hardy" (48). She claims, "Hardy's fiction registers the behavior of light with an intensity and a frequency that go far beyond the requirements of anything that might conventionally be designated as scene-setting" (48-9). Yeazell does not specifically link this attention to light to Hardy's artistic background in this article, but has elsewhere established the influence of art on Hardy's literary depiction.

[68] See in particular, Nicola Harris's "'The *Danse Macabre*': Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, Browning, Ruskin and the Grotesque," Richard Carpenter's "Hardy's 'Gurgoyles,'" and Charles E. May's "*Far from the Madding Crowd* and *The Woodlanders*: Hardy's Grotesque Pastorals."

[69] As mentioned in the introduction, Henry James's *The Art of Fiction* (1884) states, "The analogy between the art of the painter and the art of the novelist is, so far as I am able to see, complete" (554-55).

[70] Andrew Radford's research shows that Hardy "join[ed] the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club" in the period between 1880-1887 (48).

[71] Note that when Diggory is first introduced (nearly a hundred pages before Clym appears in the text), he has also been away from the heath for an extended period, selling his reddle across Wessex. It could be argued, then, that the title *The Return of the Native* refers to Diggory's homecoming, as well as that of Clym.

[72] It is interesting to note that in the first chapter's lyrical and lengthy description of the heath, Egdon itself is also referred to as an "untameable, Ishmaelitish thing" because "Civilization was its enemy" (10). This use of the word "Ishmaelitish" links Egdon's rebellion against civilizing forces to that of Diggory.

[73] The comparison of Diggory to "an automaton," combined with the above discussion of him as an "Ishmaelitish creature" (129), illustrates another important register by which Diggory is othered: he is often denied human qualities and aligned with the inanimate or the animal. To a degree, these references recall Brontë's treatment of Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre* as an otherworldly or bestial creature. The ease with which Hardy slips into these cultural techniques of othering—despite his clear admiration for Diggory—should not go unnoted.

[74] See Richard Dellamora's "Male Relations in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*" and James Kincaid's "Girl-watching, Child-beating and Other Exercises for Readers of *Jude the Obscure*." A notable exception is Tod E. Jones's "Michael Henchard: Hardy's Male Homosexual," which focuses on *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886).

[75] It should also be noted that Hopkins's illustration does not give any clear indication of Diggory's red coloring. Dalziel's study of the novel's publication history, "Anxieties of Representation: The Serial Illustrations to Hardy's *The Return of the Native,*" establishes Hopkins's hesitation to portray the gender-deviant Eustacia Vye as an attractive woman as he "tended to avoid the threatening in any form" in his work on the novel (91). As a result, Hopkins's first illustration of Eustacia highlights her masculine features, much to Hardy's dissatisfaction (94). It may be a similar conservative impulse on Hopkins's side that leads him to avoid racial markers in his illustration of Diggory Venn.

[76] The period of time between Johnny's visit and Mrs. Yeobright's discussion with Diggory is punctuated by a series of scenes in which the reddleman spies on the late night meetings of Eustacia and Wildeve, comically camouflaging himself with large pieces of cut turf in order to crawl close enough to eavesdrop on their conversation. When Diggory overhears Wildeve ask Eustacia to run away with him to America, he takes action and renews his pursuit of Thomasin by announcing his intentions to Mrs. Yeobright. Following the failure of his appeal to Mrs. Yeobright, Diggory directly

approaches Eustacia and asks her to stay away from Wildeve for Thomasin's sake, in a chapter aptly entitled "A Coalition between Beauty and Oddness."

[77] According to Dalziel, Hardy's revisions to the novel were primarily meant "to render characters, situations, and events more acceptable to a predominantly middle-class serial-reading public" (87). In these revisions, the main characters underwent what Simon Gatrell calls "a process of gentrification" in which Mrs. Yeobright is made a curate's daughter, Clym becomes the manager rather than the clerk of a jewelry shop in Paris, and Wildeve goes from being a wizard figure named Toogood to a professional engineer who manages the local inn (356). Thomasin, who goes away with Toogood out of wedlock in the original, is married to Wildeve in the revisions, before being widowed and marrying Diggory.

[78] Burnett was born in Manchester, England in 1849, before immigrating to the American state of Tennessee with her family in 1865. As an adult, Burnett "made homes in both countries, and both countries claim her as their own today" (Gerzina, "Introduction" ix).

[79] In 1895, Kaiser Wilhelm "commissioned an artist [Hermann Knackfuss] to draw an allegorical picture depicting the European powers called together by the Archangel Michael, and united in resisting Buddhism, heathenism, and barbarism" (Horne 11). The work, entitled *Die Gelben Gefahr*, was supposedly drawn from the Kaiser's own design (Mellor 13).

[80] Rohmer declared that when he conceived of the series, he realized that "Conditions for launching a Chinese villain on the market were ideal. . . . The Boxer Rebellion had started off rumors of a Yellow Peril which had not yet died down" (qtd. in Seshagiri 169).

[81] As Hulme also points out, although the Yellow Caribs were seen as having a hereditary right to the land, the European designation of the majority of the island's families as Black Caribs also "reduced the number of indigenous families [Yellow Caribs] to a handful," thereby weakening their claims (128).

[82] The naming conventions of Picasso's successive periods exemplify the easy and dangerous conflation of skin color and aesthetic color. The names of Picasso's earlier Blue and Rose periods refer to the overarching color schemes and moods of the pieces. The name of the Black Period, however, does not reference Picasso's use of tone; instead, it references the skin tone of the "Negro" peoples of Africa because this period illustrates the heavy influence of African art on Picasso's forms and composition. Herein occurs, on the part of the critics, a disturbing essentialization of African peoples made possible through the slippage between the aesthetic and racial uses of color.

[83] Simon Gikandi's criticism of Picasso's work makes clear that "Picasso's relationship to Africa, or his investment in a certain idea of Africa, which is evident from his early career to his high cubist period, was a meticulous attempt to separate the African's art form from his or her body, to abstract, as it were, those elements of the art form that would serve his purpose at crucial moments in his struggle with established conventions of Western art" (456). The portrait *Woman with a Yellow Shirt* does evidence some interest in the black body as it is a portrait, but it also features abstraction of form and a mask-like flattening of the face, making the African face into an African art object, as Gikandi argues.

[84] Sandberg associates this painting with Whistler's *The White Girl* of three years previous, stating that the figure "is, in fact, *The White Girl* translated into an Oriental setting" (504). As discussed in Chapter Four, *The White Girl*'s portrayal of Whistler's Irish mistress Hiffernan questions the relationship between whiteness, skin color, and racial identity in a similar manner to the yellowish complexion of the Chinese princess. Chang notes that in Whistler's *Purple and Rose: The Lange Leizen of the Six Marks*, painted the year before *La Princesse*, many contemporary critics, including artist William Michael Rossetti, mistook the figure of Hiffernan for a Chinese woman in the act of painting pottery (25-6).

[85] Arthur Conan Doyle was very proud of his father's artwork. His autobiography *Memories and Adventures* "lavished praise on his father as an artist" (Edwards 88): the aging author insisted, "critics would be surprised to find what a great and original artist he [Charles] was—far the greatest, in my opinion, of the family" (*Memories* 11). After Charles's commitment to an asylum for alcoholism, he continued to draw and paint, producing whimsical watercolors of fairies, as well as more "wild and fearsome" subjects, which his son described as "more terrible than [the work of] Blake" (11). At Doyle's request, his father also illustrated the first edition of *A Study in Scarlet*.

[86] Paul Barolsky argues that Holmes is characterized, especially in the earlier stories, as having "much in common with the aesthetes and decadents" of the fin de siècle (438). He claims that in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes is portrayed as "something of a connoisseur of paintings," and this knowledge of art allows him to solve the murder of Charles Baskerville by studying the family portraits (444). Nils Clausson argues something similar about the novel, pointing out that "Holmes is repeatedly associated with art" and that the critical emphasis on Holmes's scientific and rational methods of deduction "constitutes a repression of the artistic imagination that is the real source of his success as a detective" (37).

[87] Other Holmes stories conclude by revealing hidden identities without uncovering a punishable crime. Writing of "The Man with a Twisted Lip," in which a missing gentleman is revealed to be living a double life as a beggar, Audrey Jaffe states, "The story describes not a crime but a disturbance in the social field, a confusion of social

identity, which it becomes Holmes's task to resolve. That such a disturbance should appear to be a crime makes sense given the fantasy of knowledge and social control detective fiction represents" (97). The character of Lucy could be read in the same capacity, as a "disturbance in the social field," because her mother is attempting to cover her blackness. Holmes must interfere by revealing Lucy's true racial identity.

[88] Collins's *Poor Miss Finch,* the subject of Chapter Two*,* uses livid in such a manner, portraying Oscar's skin after his chemical transformation as a "livid ashen colour" (117). Madame Pratolungo describes the similarly disfigured Parisian man as "hideously distinguished by a superhuman—I had almost said a devilish—colouring of livid blackish blue!" (105).

[89] Doyle frequently uses this device to provide interest for his plots; the most famous example may be found in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1901-02), in which the supernatural "hell-hound" that has terrorized the Devonshire countryside for the length of the novel is at last revealed to be an exceedingly large dog painted with phosphorus (2: 20).

[90] Don Murillo, the murderer and the "most lewd and bloodthirsty tyrant that had ever governed any country with a pretence to civilization" (2: 316), is described with the same yellow markers as the mulatto cook. Sherlock Holmes, in his early investigations, describes Murillo as "either a foreigner or [someone who] has lived long in the tropics, for he is yellow and sapless, but tough as a whipcord" (2: 312). Later, Warner, one of Holmes's watchmen, describes Murillo as a "black-eyed, scowling, yellow devil" looking out a carriage window (2: 315). Warner's portrayal of Murillo mirrors Constable Walter's tale of the appearance of the mulatto cook as the face of the "devil" looking in "at the window" (2: 305). The yellowness of Murillo and the mulatto cook suggests both their South American origins and their criminality.

[91] The United States's extended engagement with slavery and its large black population, as well as its status as a former British colony, leads to this representation of America as a space of otherness, despite Britain's and America's parallel investments in whiteness and Anglo-Saxon superiority. Doyle often treats the United States in a manner similar to how he treats the British Empire, presenting plots about the cultish conspiracies of Mormonism (*A Study in Scarlet*) and the Ku Klux Klan ("The Five Orange Pips") alongside ones derived from British military struggles in India and South Africa.

[92] Laura Otis has explored Doyle's use of the motif of the haunting face at the window in the article "The Empire Bites Back: Sherlock Holmes as Imperial Immune System." She notes, "Throughout the Holmes stories, his respectable clients are frightened by disembodied faces, often distorted by emotion or disease, peering in or out of them through their windows" (54). Because of her focus on Doyle's postwar stories, Otis does not include a discussion of Lucy Hebron, but she does discuss the face of the "mulatto

cook" looking in at Constable Walters in "The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge," as well as the "ghastly face glimmering white as cheese" of returned colonial Godfrey Emsworth in "The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier" (2: 492). Otis determines that these "nightmarish glimpse of unusual faces" throughout the stories "suggest[] the presence and the thwarted desire of those who have been excluded from British society" (54).

[93] As Arata reminds us, in the Victorian "sexual economy, female sexuality has only one legitimate function, propagation within the bounds of marriage. Once separated from that function, . . . female sexuality becomes monstrous" (632). Although Effie adheres to social norms of marriage before procreation, she breaks the taboo against interracial sexual relations and violates her role as a propagator of the English race. For this reason, her child is vaguely associated with monstrosity, and she is presented as blackened by her first husband.

[94] As Elaine Freedgood illustrates, mahogany was a very expensive wood imported by the British primarily from the West Indies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Freedgood traces the use of mahogany in Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, arguing that it "symbolizes, naturalizes, domesticates, and internalizes the violent histories of deforestation, slavery, and the ecologically and socially devastating cultivation of cash crops in . . . Jamaica" (35). In referencing mahogany, Thackeray is both alluding to the tropic environment of Miss Swartz's origins and its role in her vast wealth. He implies that while the British characters are willing to take her wood, as well as her money (through marriage), they will not accept her as one of them because of her racial difference.

[95] As Kutzer points out, the Mem Sahib's choice to stay in the compound for a dinner party illustrates that she has neglected her domestic duty to protect her family because she has been "seduced by the ease and luxury" of colonial life (57). The novel declares that Mary's mother "cared only to go to go to parties and amuse herself with gay people" (Burnett 3), a description that implies that the Mem Sahib has been spoiled by "the elevated standing based on class, race, and nationality" enjoyed by historical colonists abroad, many of whom could not have afforded to maintain the same lifestyle in England (Buettner 16).

[96] Dane Kennedy defines tropical diseases as those that are "classifiable as afflictions associated with tropical conditions"; they consist of "malaria, cholera, typhoid fever, hepatitis, and dysentery." He explains that while all of these diseases existed in Europe, "their virulence in India made it possible [for the Anglo-Indians] to regard them as tropical afflictions" (26).

[97] Burnett described herself as "deeply interested" in the writings of Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy, but declared that she did not identify herself as a Christian Scientist, though her son Vivian joined the church as an adult (Gerzina 241-2).

[98] The reference to the besom, a homemade broom made of sticks, also introduces a related theme: Mary's extremely thin build. Introduced in first page of the text, Mary's skinniness is representative of the damaging aspects of the Indian environment. The text states that "she had always had a small appetite" and implies that she is undernourished as a result of the heat (20). Her appetite improves in England, where, as Martha explains to her, it is "th' air of th' moor that's givin' thee stomach for tha' victuals" (27).

[99] Though outside of the scope of this chapter, it must be mentioned that the novel features a second, similar plot line involving Mary's sickly cousin Colin Craven. Although Colin's story varies from Mary's as he is born in Yorkshire and is not, technically, a colonial child, the rendering of his own transformation from a sickly and overly pale child to a healthy and ruddy boy expresses the same fear of degeneration and national values as Mary's story. When introduced, Colin has been sickly since birth and neglected by his father, who grieves for Colin's deceased mother. Due to his position as sole heir to Misselthwaite, he has been exceedingly spoiled by the household staff; Burnett's frequent comparison of Colin to a "rajah" illustrate that, like Mary, he abuses his power in the manner of the despots of the East (129). Colin's achievement of physical health and proper English behavior over the course of the narrative is laid out in a course parallel to Mary's in that it portrays a generalization of medical knowledge (nothing appears to be really wrong with Colin), enacts the transition to health on through the flush and the child's complexion, and emphasizes the role of the outdoors (specifically the Yorkshire wind) in the reclamation of health.

[100] A similar alien-as-racial-other plotline can be found in Neill Blomkamp's film *District 9*, also released in 2009, though it does not include much of a colorful element due to its psuedo-realistic depiction of the brownish-gray aliens. In the South African film, protagonist Wikus van de Merwe is slowly transformed into an alien, derogatorily known as a "prawn," after being infected by an extraterrestrial fluid. The title of the film refers to a fictitious district in which the aliens, marooned when their space ship malfunctioned over Johannesburg, are kept segregated from the human inhabitants of the city; the film's alien-invasion theme rewrites the historical events of District Six in Capetown, in which 60, 000 black South Africans were forcibly relocated from their homes when the area was declared "whites only" during Apartheid. Van de Merwe's transformation into a prawn allows him—a white South African aligned with imperial and capitalist powers through his Dutch family name and his job with the corporation tasked with the policing of District Nine—to experience this historical relocation. As a result of his brutal treatment after his transformation, van de Merwe eventually "goes native" like *Avatar*'s Jake Sully and sides with the prawn residents of the district to forcefully resist the relocation. Contemporary works like *District 9* rewrite the nineteenth-century distinction between white and colored bodies as explorations of the relationships between human and alien bodies, but still follow in the spirit of the earlier novels by Collins and Hardy.

[101] One deeply unsettling element of the story is the way it seems to assume whiteness as the unspoken norm, despite being written in 2009 in a very multi-cultural Britain. In "Orange," the Ramsey family has all the markers of whiteness, with Anglo names and previous residences in Glasgow and Cardiff. Although these details are often now considered signs of nationality, rather than racial or ethnic descent, tanning itself is a practice most often associated with people with white skin. The story's textual signs point to the whiteness of the characters without feeling the necessity of naming their whiteness, as if whiteness itself is unraced. Dyer has warned against the dangers of the unspoken assumption of whiteness in Western culture, in which someone is presumed white until a racial descriptor is applied. He argues, "As long as race is something only applied to non-white peoples, as long as white people are not racially seen and named, they/we function as a human norm" (1).

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APPENDIX

Fig. A-1. *Caricature of Delacroix and Ingres Dueling in front of the Institute de France*. French School, c. 1828. Courtesy of Bridgeman Art Library.

Fig. A-2. *Sheep with reddle*. 2010. It is likely that this sheep is marked with modern artificial pigments rather than the traditional iron oxide. Courtesy of the author.

Fig. A-3. *Tower of Stinsford Church*. Thomas Hardy, no date. Courtesy of the Dorset County Museum, Dorchester.

Fig. A-4. *Bockhampton: The Hardy House and the Heath*. Thomas Hardy, no date. Courtesy of the Dorset County Museum, Dorchester.

Fig. A-5. *Imaginary Scene with Bay and Oak Tree*. Thomas Hardy, no date. Courtesy of the Dorset County Museum, Dorchester.

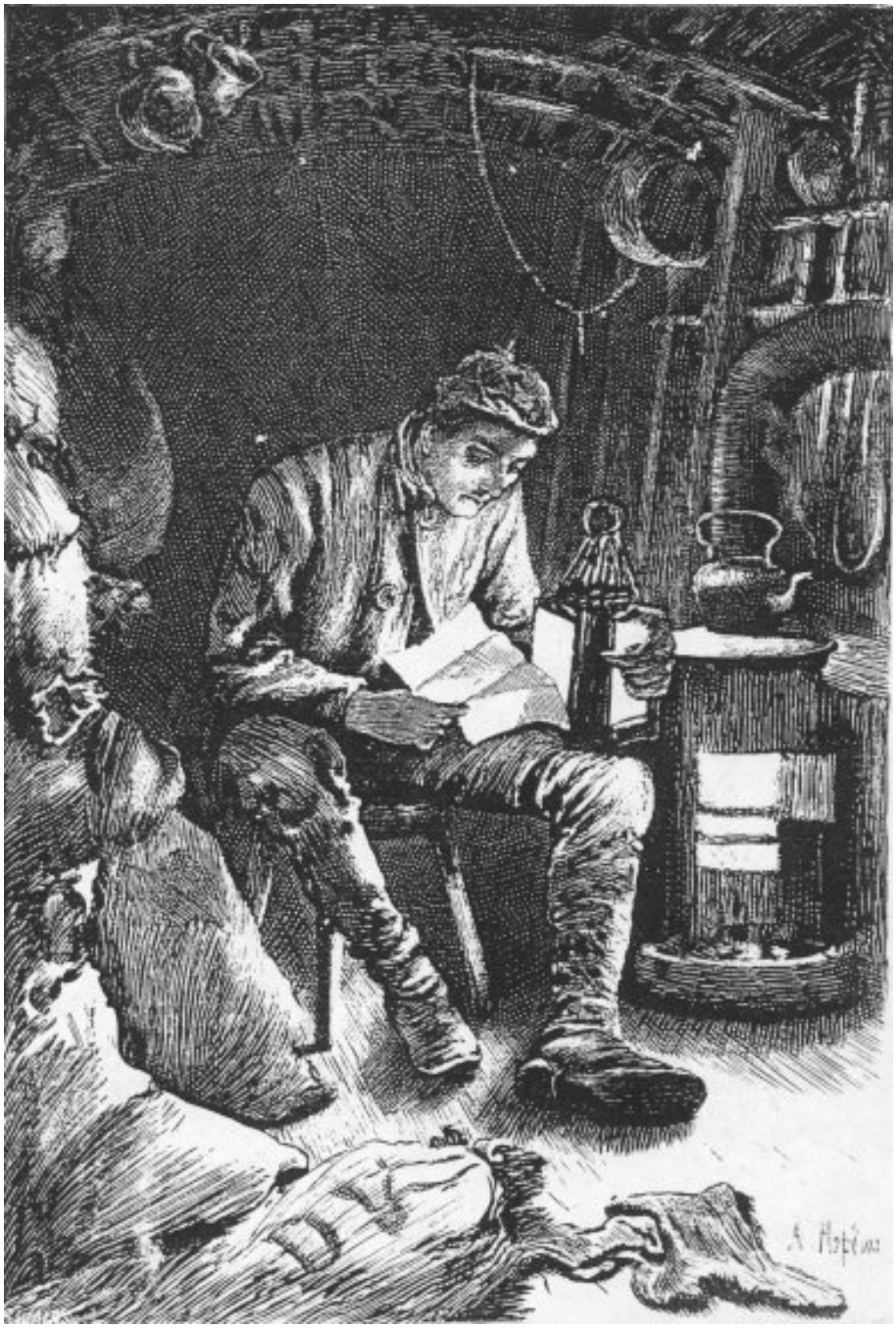

Fig. A-6. *The Reddleman Re-reads an Old Love Letter*. Arthur Hopkins, *Belgravia*, March 1878. Courtesy of Philip V. Allingham. http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/hopkins/3.html.

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